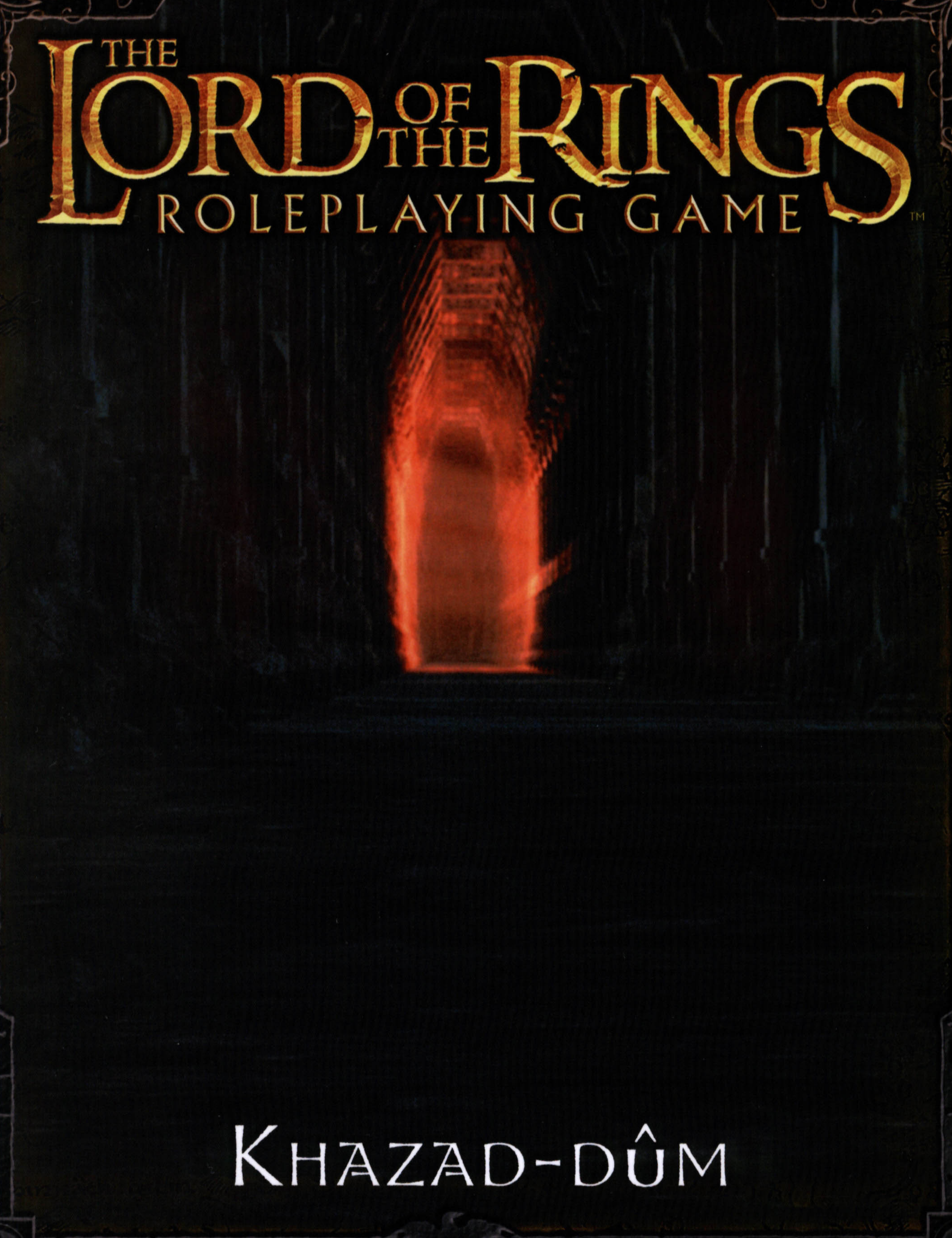
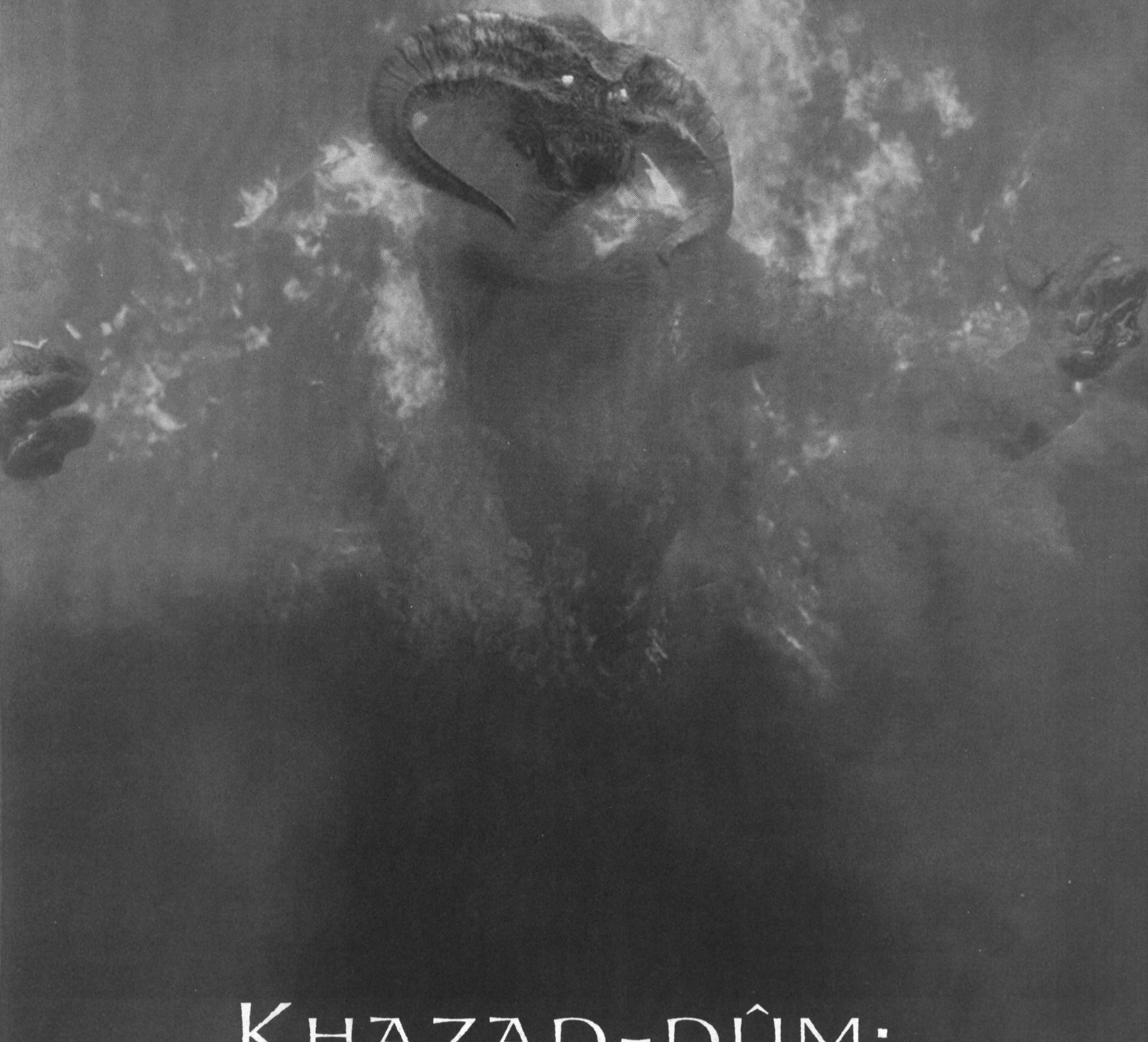


THE LORD OF THE RINGS ROLEPLAYING GAME™

KHAZAD-DÛM

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
ROLEPLAYING GAME™



KHAZAD-DÛM:
THE DELVING OF DURIN'S FOLK

THE LORD OF THE RINGS ROLEPLAYING GAME™

CREDITS

AUTHORS: MIKE MEARLS AND CHRIS SEEMAN
DEVELOPMENT AND EDITING: MATT FORBECK AND JEFF TIDBALL
ADDITIONAL EDITING AND PROOFREADING: JANICE M. SELLERS
LINE DEVELOPMENT: JEFF TIDBALL
CREATIVE DIRECTION: CHRISTIAN MOORE AND OWEN SEYLER
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES: LAURIE BATTLE
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, NEW LINE CINEMA: JOHN MAYO
ASSET COORDINATION, WETA DIGITAL: GLEN SHARAH

VISUAL CREATIVE DIRECTION: DAN BURNS
ART DIRECTION: JESSE CASSEM
ILLUSTRATION: DANIEL FALCONER, WARREN MAHY, CHRISTIAN RIVERS, AND BEN WOOTEN
CARTOGRAPHY: ROB LAZZARETTI
GRAPHIC DESIGN: JESSE CASSEM
PRODUCTION DESIGN: JESSE CASSEM AND OWEN SEYLER

SPECIAL THANKS: DOUG BURKE AND ROB LAZZARETTI

PLAYTEST COORDINATION: JASON DURALL, JIM JOHNSON, AND SCOTT LLEWELYN
PLAYTESTING: SHERRIE ANDERSON, BILLY ARNOLD, JEREMY BERNSTEIN, GREG BEYERLEIN, ROBERT DEFENDI, JIM GRINNELL, ANDI JOHNSON, SAM JOHNSON, BRENDA LLEWELYN, GARY LLEWELYN, ALAN MATTHEWS, KATHERINE MCCANN, MIKE RENSTROM, ARTHUR ROSENBERG, ALEX THOMAS, AND JESSIE WEEKS

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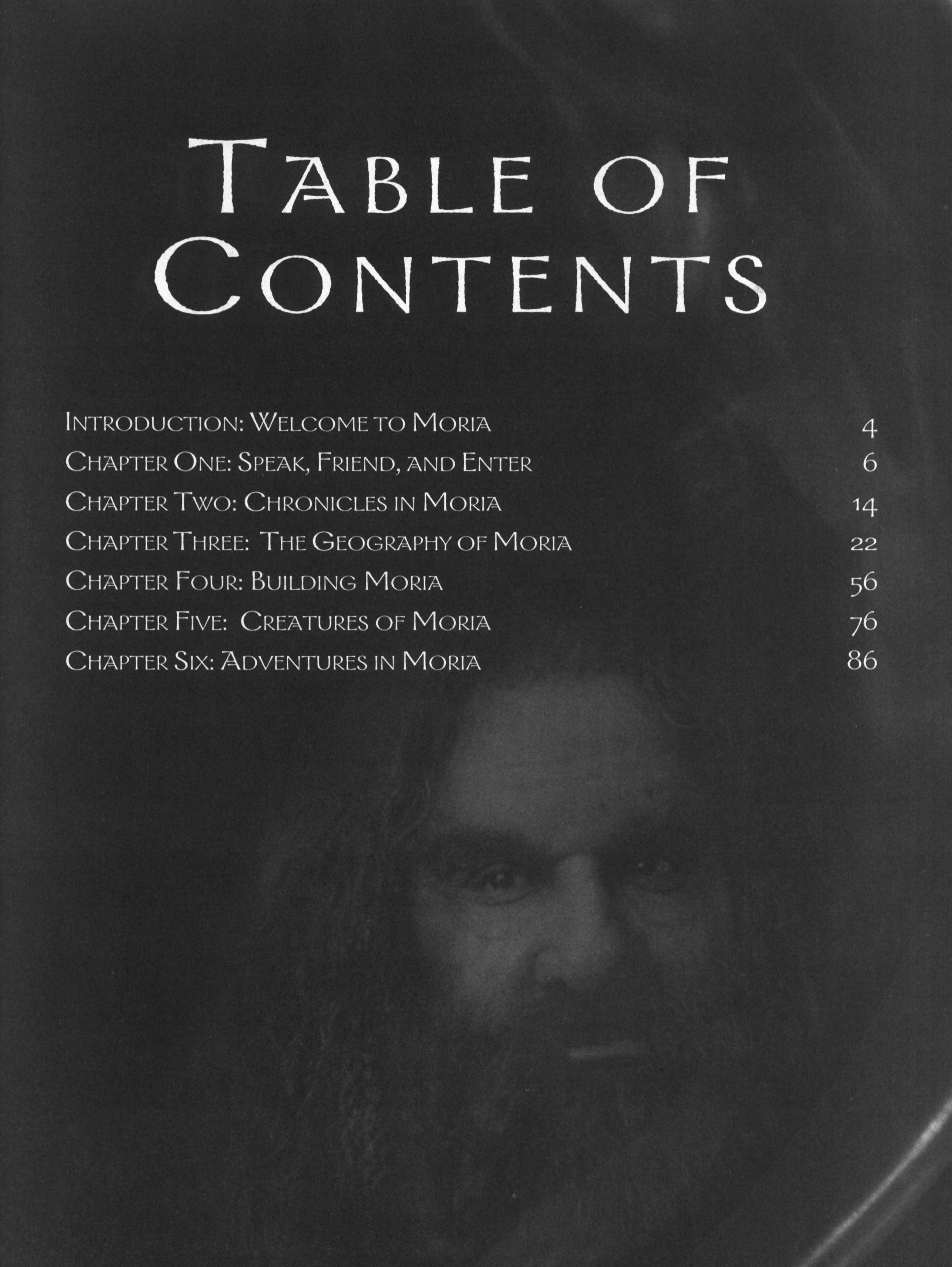


Introduction

WELCOME TO MORIA

'They have taken the bridge and the second hall. We have barred the gates but cannot hold them for long. The ground shakes. Drums, drums in the deep. We cannot get out.'
— Gandalf, reading from the Book of Mazarbul, The Fellowship of the Ring film

Moria. The name conjures images of a desperate flight in the dark, endless hordes of Orcs and Trolls, and the terrible, fiery Balrog. It is a shadowy place, more defined by the potential of what lurks around the next corner than by the few places within it that the Fellowship passed through. In *The Lord of the Rings*, we only see a few of its halls and chambers, but these locations are vastly outnumbered by the countless passages, doorways, and stairways that criss-crossed the path of Frodo and his companions.

Moria is the grandfather of all dungeons, the first and greatest of a long line that has extended much farther than Tolkien ever could have imagined. Moria's influence on roleplaying and computer games is undeniable. The ruined, old, subterranean stronghold infested with Orcs, Trolls, and other monsters has become a cliché in games, but one so powerful that after decades it still holds our fascination.

What is it about Moria that draws us to it? Tolkien reveals precious little about the place in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. During the course of their journey through Moria, the members of the Fellowship enter all of four locations that receive any level of detail. The rest is a parade of yawning, black portals, stairs descending into the dark, and an endless array of passages heading into the unknown. And therein lies Moria's appeal.

While fear of the unknown may be the greatest fear of all, the unknown also brings out the best in our imagination and drive. It is curiosity that drives explorers to set out for the horizon, and it is curiosity that compels us to dream of Moria's endless, labyrinthine passages. The Mines of Moria are a canvas for our imagination. Because we know so little about them, we must fill in the details ourselves. The promise of the terrors they hold, the prospect of boundless treasures, both of these push us to wonder exactly what could we find there. What if Gandalf had chosen a different path for the Fellowship? What if he had not led the company to the Chamber of Mazarbul? Our imagination and curiosity press us to ask these questions and wonder at their answers.

This set provides a starting point for your own dreams and visions. It provides a skeleton that awaits your finishing touches. Moria can only come to life when you begin to answer the questions it asks of you. What lies down this passage? What awaits heroes who descend into the deepest levels of the Mines? This book is a starting point for your chronicles, but in the end only you can answer those questions. Just as Moria has spawned so many thoughts and dreams, it has also created a nearly infinite number of answers to the question, 'What does Moria mean to you?' This book cannot possibly answer that question for you, but perhaps it can help you answer it for yourself.

OVERVIEW

The material presented within this book is designed as a toolkit you can use to build complete chronicles that occur within Moria, or adventures that take place there as part of a larger chronicle. Think of this book as a toolbox and each chapter as a specific tool you can use to craft your own personal version of Moria.

CHAPTER ONE discusses the history of Moria, from its initial foundation to its status at the end of the War of the Ring. The information given there helps you place Moria within the greater context of Middle-earth.

CHAPTER TWO covers game mechanics applicable to Moria that differentiate it from other realms in Middle-earth. The Mines are a daunting place, and their very nature as a stronghold of the Shadow is as much a threat as a horde of Orc-warriors. A discussion covers several time periods from Moria's history in detail and introduces the concept of a multigenerational chronicle that charts Moria's history from its fall to its possible recovery. This chapter also explores the types of chronicles you can run in Moria and provides some sample ideas you can expand into chapters in your chronicles.

CHAPTER THREE breaks Moria down into several regions and discusses them in varying levels of depth. A few areas of Moria are given detailed maps and encounter keys, while others are described in broad terms. This portion of the book serves as a road map for your chronicles and as an example you can follow or modify when mapping out your own sections of Moria.

CHAPTER FOUR introduces a few rules systems and tools for creating regions in Moria for your chronicle. The Peril system randomly determines the dangers the characters face on their travels, while rules and examples of traps and natural hazards round out the obstacles the heroes can face. A system for using the map tiles included in this set allows you to quickly populate an area with different rooms and creatures with a minimum of work.

CHAPTER FIVE covers the foul creatures that infest Moria. The rules given here allow you to set strange, terrible threats from the deep places of the earth against the heroes. From a lowly giant rat to the mighty Balrog, Moria's inhabitants receive descriptions and game statistics.

CHAPTER SIX presents some advice on designing adventures, as well as two short, sample scenarios you can use to start a chronicle. Both of these also serve as examples of how to build an adventure in Moria.

The **APPENDIX** discusses the Orcs of Moria. It includes ideas on how to make them more distinctive and how to easily modify them to make them a threat to heroes across a wide range of skill levels. Furthermore, optional rules allow you to simulate the fast-paced heroics of the films and make it easier for skilled heroes to face down hordes of Orcs and other weaker foes.

While each chapter stands alone, they work best when used together to create adventures. Read through the first three chapters to get a feel for Moria and how adventures there can work. Chapter Two provides advice for building a chronicle's foundation, while Chapters One and Three serve as road maps to spark your imagination and give your ideas context. Once you have created the basic plot for a chronicle and placed it within Moria, Chapters Four, Five, and Six provide all the game rules you need to chart out Moria, stock it with fearsome foes, and arrange them in a manner best suited to the story you wish to tell.

READ NO FURTHER!

The contents of this book are meant for the Narrator's eyes only. If you are a player, you may only read the portions of this book that your Narrator permits. Otherwise, you may spoil the surprises your Narrator has devised for your adventures.

PARTING WORD

Remember that Moria is now yours to do with as you wish. Its dark, mysterious passages are a playground for your imagination. Think back to the first time you read *The Fellowship of the Ring* or saw the movie. Remember the awe, wonder, and fear the place inspired.

With those feelings in mind, you now have the opportunity to share that experience with your players. You are the architect of great epics, adventures that are waiting to leap from your mind and sweep away the players on a wondrous journey. Remember what drew you to Moria, what prompted you to pick up this set, and instil those thoughts and emotions into your own version of Moria.

Chapter One

SPEAK, FRIEND, AND ENTER

'No harp is wrung, no hammer falls;
The darkness dwells in
Durin's halls...'
— The Fellowship of the Ring

The Mines of Moria were once the dwelling of Durin's folk. The origins and history of that people—and of the other Dwarf-kindreds—are recounted in Chapter One of *Dwarves of Middle-earth: Seven Houses of the Khazâd*. The chapter you're about to read delves more deeply into the tale of Moria itself, from its glorious beginnings to its dark demise.

* * *

Khazad-dûm, the Dwarrowdelf, stretches beneath the threefold peaks of Caradhras, Celebdil, and Fanuidhol, which tower above the skyline of the central Misty Mountains like the spurs of a snow-clad crown. Cradled between the eastern flanks of the latter two peaks lies Azanulbizar—the Dimrill Dale—and the dark waters of Kheled-zâram—the Mirrormere. Thousands of years ago, uncounted centuries before the birth of Sun and Moon, the wonder of that lake laid its enchantment upon Durin the Deathless, First and Eldest of the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves. Here would his heart rest, and here he would establish his kingdom.

Following the First Union of the Khazâd at Mount Gundabad, each of the Seven Houses began delving great mansions for their habitation. Durin led his people to Azanulbizar, and in the caves that opened at the foot of Celebdil they commenced the fashioning of the Dwarrowdelf, the greatest of Dwarf-cities.

THE ELDER DAYS

Many songs are sung of the glories of Durin's day, yet most speak only of the timeless grandeur of his halls, or of the

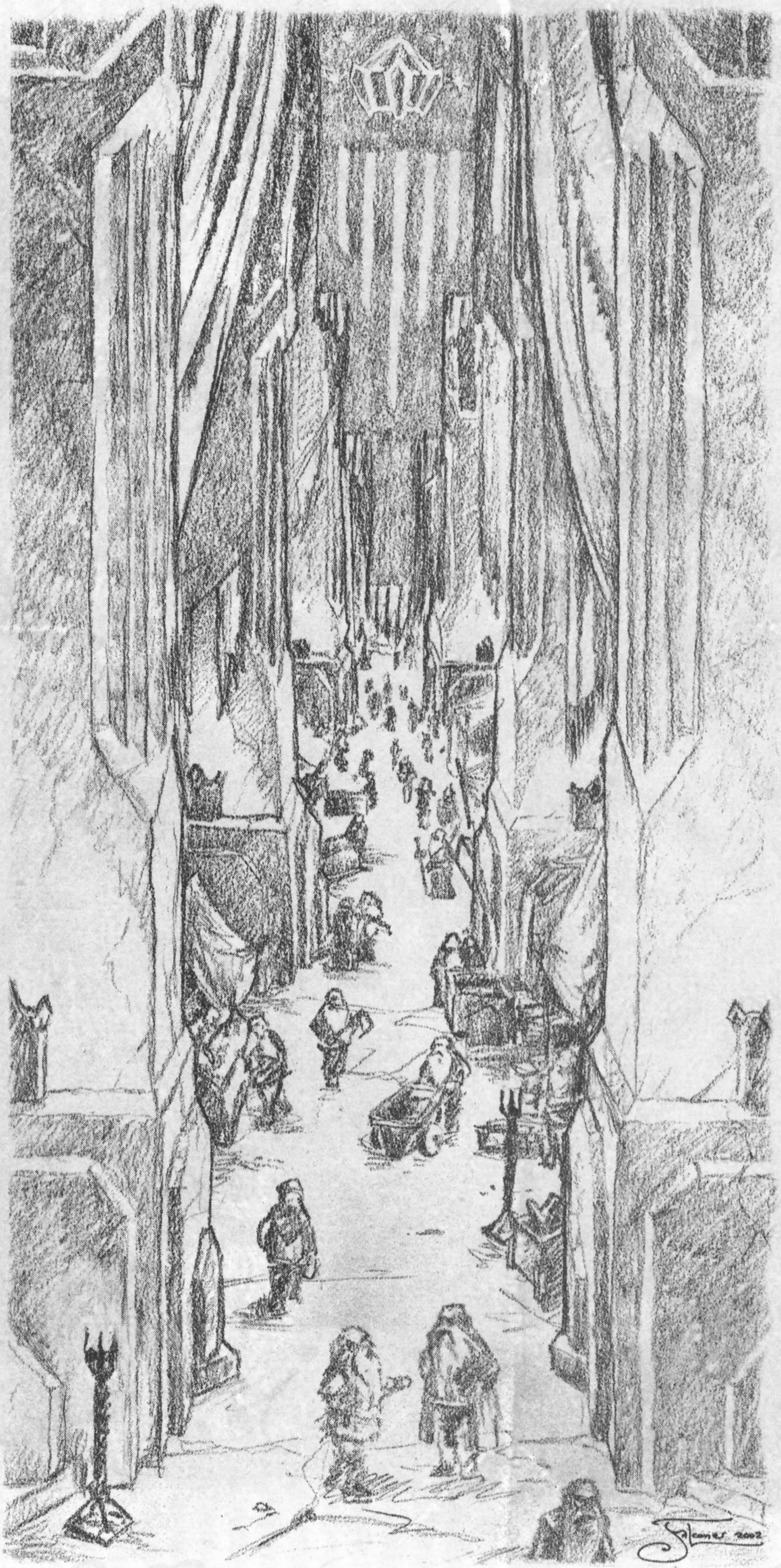
masterworks of the Dwarves in the childhood of their race. While the Wars of Beleriand raged on in the West, nothing seems to have disturbed the serene majesty of Khazad-dûm in that untroubled age. Even the cataclysm of the Great Battle, which ruined the Dwarf-mansions of the Blue Mountains, had little discernable impact on the Dwarrowdelf.

Only later did the Wise perceive that in these distant convulsions the doom of Moria was wrought. For beneath the earth, where Time is not counted, a deadly bane for Durin's folk made its slow and secret way far below the deepest delvings of the Dwarves, awaiting a change in the world to work its evil. A Balrog of Morgoth, fleeing from the destruction of Thangorodrim, secreted itself at the roots of Caradhras.

THE SECOND AGE

Though fraught with sorrow for Elves and Men, the passing of the Elder Days occasioned great prosperity for Khazad-dûm. Its numbers were greatly increased and its arts enriched by the immigration to Durin's halls of many Dwarves from Úri and Linnar's kindreds, fleeing the ruin of their ancestral mansions in the Blue Mountains. The expansion of its populace necessitated a physical expansion of the Dwarrowdelf, culminating in what would come to be known as Moria's Western Deeps.

Even greater blessings were soon to follow. The discovery of *mithril* beneath the Mountains of Moria promised wealth beyond the reckoning of kings. In time, the fame of Khazad-dûm reached the ears of the Noldor, the High Elves of the West who had come to Middle-earth to recover the Silmarils, which Morgoth had stolen from their greatest craftsman, Fëanor. After the Great Battle, many of these returned to Valinor,



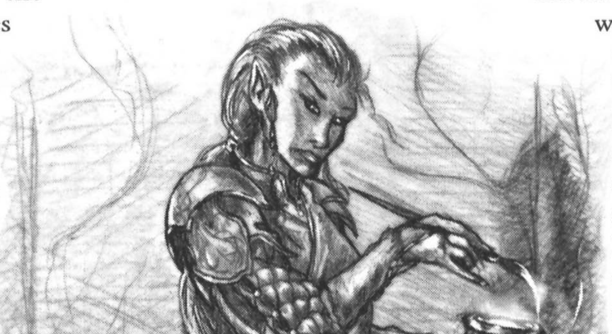
but some were unwilling to abandon Middle-earth, and desired rather to enrich it by their arts. One of these well-meaning recalcitrants was Celebrimbor, a descendant of Fëanor who shared his forefather's love of making.

Having beheld the beauty of *mithril*, Celebrimbor desired to partake in its crafting. Journeying east, he joined like-minded Noldor in founding the realm of Eregion—'Hollin,' as Men later called it—beneath the slopes of Celebdil. The Dwarves received the newcomers as they had no other Elves, for the Noldor were kindred-spirits in this: they had been friends and pupils of the Maker in Valinor, and they shared the same desires the Maker had planted in the hearts of the Khazâd.

The Dwarves and Elves of Moria and Hollin had much to learn from one another, and the golden age of Khazad-dûm and Eregion spanned eight and a half centuries, reaching its noontide under the glorious rule of Durin III. The greatest monument to this happy time was the opening of a western gate into Moria, the 'Hollin Gate.' Built by Narvi, a Dwarf of Linnar's folk, and inscribed with *ithildin* by the craft of Celebrimbor, the Doors of Durin celebrated the openness that existed between the two races.

But Celebrimbor and the Noldor, belied by Sauron's fair appearance and tempted by the knowledge he promised them, welcomed the guised Enemy into their fellowship. Already secretly bent on dominating the Free Peoples, but lacking the unique skills of the Noldor, Sauron essayed to trick Celebrimbor's people into aiding him in the forging of Rings of Power, holding out to them the fulfilment of their misguided desire to preserve Middle-earth unstained by the ravages of Time. By this denial of the mortal world, the Elven-smiths sealed their own doom and, indirectly, that of the Dwarves.

The Rings were to be gifts bestowed upon each of the Free Peoples, according to the number of their kindreds. Seven were therefore reserved for the lords of the Khazâd, but they were not to be distributed until their full number was complete. This afforded Sauron a respite for his secret forging of the One Ring to rule them all. Celebrimbor perceived the mind of Sauron, however, and resolved to prevent him from gaining control over the others. This was the beginning of the War of the Elves and Sauron.



When tidings reached him of the mustering of Sauron's forces, Celebrimbor's first act was to entrust the Three Elven-rings, which he prized most of all, to secret guardians. The Seven and the Nine remained in his treasury in Eregion, with the exception of the First of the Seven, destined for Durin's line, which he bestowed upon his friend and ally. Still, he bade Durin not to wear this ring while Sauron possessed the One, for through it the Dark Lord might bring Khazad-dûm under his sway.

A Dwarf-lord of lesser wisdom or greater pride might have scoffed at these warnings and succumbed to temptation. Not Durin's heir. He perceived the truth of Celebrimbor's words. Even had it been otherwise, he would not have betrayed the trust of his friend. Indeed, so great a matter did it seem to Durin that he sent messengers at once to all the fastnesses of his folk in the North, bidding them send warriors for the strengthening of Khazad-dûm. To his Northman allies, he likewise sent for provisions in the event of a siege.

After nearly three years of heroic resistance, Eregion fell to Sauron's forces. Celebrimbor was slain, and the Dark Lord seized the unsequestered rings. Durin's prudence in the defence of the Dwarrowdelf had been wisely executed, but it failed to stave off Sauron's ire. Indeed, it intensified it. When the Dwarf-king led out a sortie against the hosts of Mordor as they pursued the survivors of Eregion northwards—and then retreated again behind the impregnable gates of Khazad-dûm—the Lord of the Rings knew he could not afford to leave Durin's folk unfought in his rear as he advanced west.

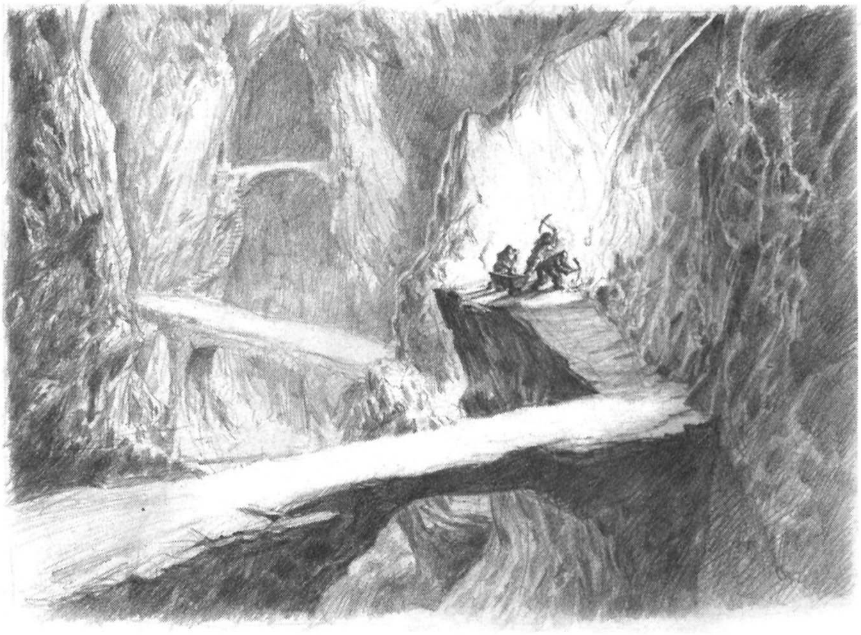
Foiled by the Doors of Durin, Sauron resolved to divide the strength of the Dwarves by throwing Rhovanion into confusion. Accordingly, he detached several legions of Orcs to strike at Gundabad and the Dwarf-holds of the Grey

Mountains. At the same time, he sent out his heralds to arouse the Easterlings of Rhûn against the Dwarves' Northman allies. By this, he purposed to shatter Durin's ability to maintain a standing army or to replenish his warriors by reinforcements from the North.

Sauron's victory in the west was short-lived. Having devastated all of Eriador as far as the River Lhûn, he was then repulsed from Lindon by the arrival of a Númenórean fleet and driven out of the Westlands to nurse his wounds in Mordor. But in his efforts against the Dwarves and their allies, the Dark Lord was all too successful. Gundabad was re-taken by Orcs after a year-long siege, and his Easterling hordes decimated the Northmen to near extinction. Durin was cut off from the rest of his people and isolated from the northern and eastern houses. The Dark Years had begun.

Moria withstood Sauron's dominion, but at the price of isolation from the outside world. As the Second Age drew to its close, a new cataclysm wracked Middle-earth. The Downfall of Númenor altered the shape of the earth, causing greater damage to the Free Peoples than the Great Battle that had ended the Elder Days.

Durin's folk suffered the least damage amid this turmoil. But another, and more fateful, change took place. In the movement of the mountains, the Balrog of Moria was caught and imprisoned at the roots of Caradhras. That might have been a boon to Durin's race had not the *mithril* lodes also shifted towards Caradhras, drawing the Dwarves onwards to their Day of Doom.



THE THIRD AGE

The deeds of Durin's folk in the War of the Last Alliance and in the early centuries of the age that followed are recounted in *Dwarves of Middle-earth: Seven Houses of the Khazâd*. War, dragons, and pestilence ravaged the lands round about them, but Moria remained largely untouched. One mischance only diminished the glory of Khazad-dûm: the mithril veins under Caradhras were beginning to run out.

This stung the pride of Durin's race—perhaps too deeply than was just for an otherwise secure and prosperous people. The loss of the *mithril* troubled their king most of all. Was he not Durin VI, scion of the Deathless, whose very name was a blessing to his folk? Why should he not enjoy glory equal to his fathers—or surpass it?

Such promptings were undoubtedly due to the influence of Durin's ring, through which Sauron was ever striving to undo the fortunes of the eldest house of the Dwarves. Durin VI had indeed inherited his kingdom with the wisdom of his fathers intact, for even after Sauron's loss of the One Ring in the Last Alliance, still the lords of Moria held it perilous to wear the ring that Celebrimbor had entrusted to their forefather, seeing the evils that the Rings had wrought upon the other houses.

But now Durin gave way. Was not Sauron vanquished? Why should this ring, which had been gifted in good faith by a friend of the Khazâd—not with purposed dominion by the Deceiver—bring evil rather than good to Moria? With such reasoning to silence the voice of truth, Durin set the ring upon his finger. Immediately, he beheld in his mind's eye all the deeps and hollows of the earth, the realm of the Maker. He looked upon caverns of crystal and plumbed subterranean waters. He detected hidden bounty of precious ores and pursued their secret paths through the living rock. And he perceived at last what he sought, at the roots of Caradhras: the mother lode of *mithril*. But in his elation, Durin missed the shadow whose sleep he was fated to bring to an end.

With a fervour bordering on obsession, the Dwarves of Moria deepened their mines, plumbing the earth's silent depths for the elusive prize. Finally, after nearly a century of labour, the hoped-for *mithril* lode was found. Wealth unimaginable now lay before their eyes, and with it awoke secret avarice. But for a brief time—scarcely a generation of Men—there was no lack of Moria-silver, and it seemed to some that the ancient glories of the Second Age might be restored to them.

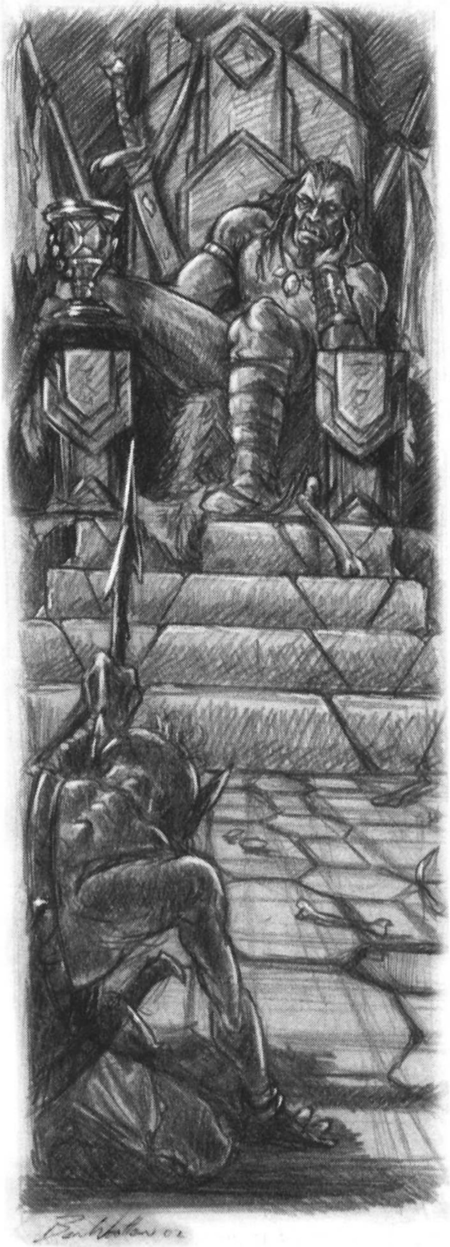
Durin himself devoted his newfound wealth to the hollowing of the Endless Stair, from the heights of Celebdil to the deepest foundations of stone. And upon Celebdil's tine he erected a tower from whence to survey all the earth, as though he were its lord. With the power of his ring, not even the mountains could hope to vie with the Heir of Durin. By such hubris were the Dwarves brought low, blinding them to the subtle machinations of the Dark Lord's will.

Moria's Day of Doom had come at last. As the Dwarves pursued the *mithril* veins beneath Caradhras, their tunnelling breeched the Balrog's confinement, releasing the demon from more than two millennia of imprisonment. Even then, Durin's Bane might have been confined to the lower depths, far from Dwarrowdelf. But the Endless Stair, the very symbol of Durin's pride, now laid all of Moria bare to the demon's malice. In the space of less than a year, Khazad-dûm, greatest delving of the Dwarves, became desolate.

FIRE AND SHADOW

Fortunately for the Free Peoples, the Balrog is a subterranean creature, inured to darkness and hateful of the Sun. Having sated its primordial lust for destruction, Durin's Bane contented itself with the emptiness of Moria. For five centuries neither Orc nor Troll dared set foot in Khazad-dûm. It was only with the end of the Watchful Peace and the return of the Dark Lord to Dol Guldur in Mirkwood that the Balrog's solitude was disturbed.

Balrogs, it must be remembered, were never servants of Sauron. In the Elder Days, they were his peers in common servitude to Morgoth. And although Sauron was greater in might than they, he could not hope—without the One Ring—to bend their nihilistic violence to his will. Still, the Dark Lord might well strike a bargain with the demon.



Control of Moria was essential to Sauron's plans to occupy the passes of the Misty Mountains, further isolating the Free Peoples of East and West. Though the Balrog had no real use for Sauron's minions, the idea of having an army at its beck and call appealed to it. With Orcs and Trolls under its command, Durin's Bane could extend the reach of its destruction to the world outside its shadowy domain. In return, the demon would tolerate the habitation of Moria's upper levels by Sauron's creatures.

By this alliance of convenience (or rather, of mutual neglect), evil infested Moria. Some came from the surrounding mountains. Others slowly infiltrated in from Mordor. The latter were black Uruks, the result of a recent breeding experiment from the pits of Dol Guldur and the Black Land, which were beginning to make their presence felt at that time. Though Sauron always maintained spies among the ranks, the new denizens of Dwarrowdelf were left, for the most part, to their own factious ways: breeding, multiplying, and making war on one another for supremacy. So long as they kept Moria from being used by his enemies, the Dark Lord was pleased.

In time, the Orcs of Moria were brought under the iron fist of Azog, an Uruk of great strength and cunning. He it was who slew Thrór and brought about the War of the Dwarves and the Orcs, which temporarily ended Moria's infestation. This was ultimately a fruitless victory, since the Balrog still prevented any attempts by the Dwarves to retake the halls of their fathers. It was only after the Battle of Five Armies—in which the Orcs of the North suffered an even more crushing defeat—that Durin's folk began to take serious thought for Khazad-dûm.

MORIA TIMELINE

ELDER DAYS

- Durin discovers Mirrormere.
- Durin's folk begin delving Khazad-dûm in the caves above the Dimrill Dale.
- Morgoth is defeated in the Great Battle. The Balrog escapes Thangorodrim by secret subterranean ways until he comes to rest at the roots of Caradhras.

SECOND AGE

c. 40	Many of Úri and Linnar's folk abandon Belegost and Nogrod for the protection of Khazad-dûm.
c. 100	*Mithril* first discovered.
750	Eregion (Hollin) founded about the West-gate of Khazad-dûm, which the Elves begin to call 'Moria.' Great friendship emerges between the Elf-smiths and Durin's folk.
1200	Deceived by Sauron's fair appearance, Celebrimbor welcomes the Dark Lord into Eregion. Sauron enriches the knowledge and skills of the Noldor.
c. 1500	Under Sauron's tutelage, the Elf-smiths begin forging the Rings of Power.
c. 1600	Sauron secretly forges the One Ring in Mordor.
1693	The War of the Elves and Sauron begins. Celebrimbor entrusts the First of the Seven Rings to Durin III.
1695	Sauron invades Eregion. Moria is strengthened by its northern colonies.
1697	Sauron's forces lay waste to Eregion. They pursue the surviving Noldo but are thwarted by an attack from Durin's folk and the Elves of Lórien. The gates of Khazad-dûm are shut.
1701	Sauron is driven out of Eriador and returns to Mordor. Peace is restored to the Westlands.
c. 1800	The Dark Years begin as Sauron extends his dominion into the North, East and South of Middle-earth. Communication between Moria and the Dwarf-lords of the East is obstructed.
2911	Many of Linnar's folk depart Moria for Barazbizar (Carn Dûm) in Angmar.
3319	The *mithril* veins shift in the convulsion of Númenor's downfall and become more difficult to access. The Balrog is imprisoned beneath Caradhras.

THIRD AGE

861	The division of Arnor strengthens ties between Moria and Tharbad.
c. 1275	Over the course of the next century, Moria's population swells with refugees fleeing from the Grey Mountains, the Iron Hills, and Angmar.

DRUMS IN THE DEEP

Since his father's death at the Battle of Azanulbizar, the dream of returning to Dwarrowdelf had haunted Balin son of Fundin, former companion of Thorin Oakenshield. At length, Dáin Ironfoot, King under the Mountain, reluctantly granted Balin leave to lead a company of Dwarves to establish if they could a colony in Khazad-dûm. Together with them went some few Northmen, who were to supply the would-be colonists through tillage and herding in the Dimrill Dale.

The Dwarves did not find a deserted Moria on their arrival. At that point, a great Uruk-chieftain and his followers occupied the Dimrill Gate and its adjacent halls. Fierce fighting erupted once again in Azanulbizar, as Balin's company joined battle under the noonday sun with the fearless Uruks. In spite of losses, Durin's folk and their Mannish allies were victorious. As the Northmen secured the dale, Balin advanced into the Dwarrowdelf.

Before long, the Dwarves were masters of the strategic Twenty-first Hall, near the Chamber of Mazarbul. Having recovered Durin's Axe and various *mithril* regalia, Balin proclaimed himself Lord of Moria and began to explore the further reaches of the Deeps. In spite of occasional clashes with renegade Orcs and Trolls, the colony prospered for nearly five years.

Or so it seemed. The Dwarves' presence did not ultimately escape Sauron's notice. Having been informed of his servants' troubles, the Dark Lord instructed his chief Orc-spy in the Dwarrowdelf—an Uruk named Grishlug—to muster a new war-host and to coordinate its attack with the Balrog. Informing Durin's Bane of the Dwarf-intrusion into the Dwarrowdelf was no easy task for Grishlug. It involved sacrificing a whole battalion of expendable Orcs to the Shadow's wrath.

Once the Uruk-chieftain persuaded the Balrog to cooperate, the demon contrived an insidious ploy to bring the colonists to a grisly end. Commanding Grishlug to dam the outflow of the Sirannon by the Hollin Gate, Durin's Bane roused from the dark waters of the Underdeeps a nameless creature of sleepless hunger to lurk within the pool created by the Orkish dam. This prevented the escape of the Dwarves by the West-gate. Their egress blocked from below and to the west, the net would be completed by an Uruk-assault upon the newly built Dimrill Gate, once the Dwarves' Northman allies were eliminated. Hedged in on all sides, the Dwarves could then be killed off with slow relish.

The Balrog's scheme worked all too well. On November 10th, TA 2994, Balin was felled by an Orc-arrow in Dimrill Dale. The destruction of the defenders' food supply followed soon after. Within days, the East-gate was breeched, and Grishlug's Uruks poured into the Dwarrowdelf from the Pass of Caradhras. Desperate to secure the Hollin Gate, Balin's trusted friend Óin led four companions to scout out the situation. There they found the way barred by a lake, and as they endeavoured to circumvent it, a slimy tentacle dragged Óin to a watery grave.

The survivors—including Ori, another of the former companions of Thorin Oakenshield—rallied in the Chamber of Mazarbul, there to contemplate the folly that had driven them to ignore the prophetic words of Dáin at Azanulbizar: 'The world must change and some other power than ours must come before Durin's Folk walk again in Moria.' With those words etched in their hearts, the Khazâd made ready to face their doom. 'They are coming,' read the last words of the Book of Mazarbul.

MORIA TIMELINE: THE THIRD AGE (CONTINUED)

1636	The ravages of the Great Plague curtail Moria's food supply. Traffic with the Blue Mountains ceases for many years.
1731	Durin VI born.
c. 1850	The diminishing *mithril* veins run out. Durin dares to wield the First of the Seven Rings, pressing the search for *mithril* ever deeper beneath Caradhras.
1940	More rich veins of *mithril* are at last discovered near the roots of Caradhras. Prosperity returns to Moria.
1980	The Balrog is freed and slays Durin as it ravages Moria.
1981	Durin's folk abandon Moria.
2460	From out of the East, Sauron returns to Dol Guldur with increased strength.
c. 2470	Uruks first appear out of Mordor.
c. 2480	Orcs of the Misty Mountains begin to make secret strongholds to control all passes through the mountains. Having reached a tenuous truce with the Balrog, Sauron begins to colonise the upper levels of Moria with his minions.
2790	Azog of Moria slays Thrór.
2793	The War of the Dwarves and Orcs begins.
2799	The Orcs of Moria are slain or scattered in the Battle of the Dimrill Dale, but the Balrog's presence dissuades the Dwarves from attempting to reclaim it.
c. 2845	Gandalf enters Moria, searching for the missing Thráin.
2951	Sauron declares himself openly in Mordor and begins gathering power.
c. 2957	Aragorn journeys through Moria.
2989	Balin and other Dwarves from Erebor attempt to re-colonise Moria.
2994	Balin and his companions are discovered and destroyed by Orcs.
3018	Gollum hides in Moria after escaping the Elves.
3019	The members of the Fellowship pass through Moria and arouse its denizens. Gandalf fights and vanquishes the Balrog.

THE PROPHECY

Despite Gandalf's victory over the Balrog upon the peak of Celebdil—and the passing of Sauron soon thereafter—Moria remains infested by Orcs, Trolls, and other evils. It is whispered among the Dwarves of Erebor that not until the Deathless is born into the world a seventh time and Dwarves gathered in a final Union shall Moria be reclaimed. This oracle portends mighty deeds to come, for already once before the Seven Houses refused to fight for Moria. Many of Durin's folk take this to mean the coming war will involve some matter of truly great consequence that has not yet revealed itself to the Khazâd. Whatever may happen, the Dwarves have pledged to never again tempt fate as did Durin VI and Balin son of Fundin. Instead, they put trust in their Maker and ever hope for the return of Durin's Day.

Chapter Two

CHRONICLES IN MORIA

> *'When Thrór came to Moria the Gate*
> *was open. Nár begged him to beware, but*
> *he took no heed of him. . . .'*
> — *The Return of the King*

Moria presents a daunting, thrilling location for adventures in Middle-earth. It is a massive complex of tunnels, chambers, mineshafts, and caverns infested with Orcs, Trolls, and worse. Both before and after the War of the Ring it is a nest of evil waiting for a band of heroes to cleanse it of the Shadow and return it to its former glory.

Moria's size and scope prevent this set from detailing its every nook and cranny. Instead, the material here gives you a foundation on which to build your own Moria. This chapter discusses the general rules for travelling within Moria and exploring its reaches. It also discusses how to design a chronicle that centres on Moria and how to use this place within chronicles that focus at least part of their action there.

THE REGIONS OF MORIA

Moria is broken up into three basic regions: Dwarrowdelf, the Western Deeps, and the Mines. Each region is composed of a number of areas. Dwarrowdelf, for example, comprises seven levels, each of which is an area.

Dwarrowdelf is the city of the Dwarves. When they occupied Moria, they lived here and conducted trade and business within its great halls. Dwarrowdelf is divided into seven levels, called deeps, the First Deep being the lowest and the Seventh Deep the highest. Each deep contains—among other chambers, passages, and spaces—three halls, numbered from one to twenty-one,

starting at the Great Gates and ascending upward sequentially.

The Western Deeps, which comprise the Western Deep proper as well as the Eastern Axebold area, consists of the passages and chambers built around the Hollin Gate. The Western Deeps are connected to Dwarrofdelf by a long thoroughfare known as Durin's Way.

The Mines include all of the areas beneath Dwarrowdelf and the Western Deeps. The Dwarves carved most of these passages in their endless search for gold, iron, and *mithril*, though some of these caverns existed long before the Dwarves delved into the earth.

TRAVEL

The overview map—'Vertical Exaggeration of Moria'—allows you to determine at a glance where the characters stand in relation to the rest of Moria. Each area is described by a box. Taken together, they depict the rough locations of both various areas within the mountain as well as the routes that connect them. It bears noting that just as each area represents a collection of halls, passages, and rooms, each route may represent more than one shaft, route, or hallway that all comprise a given route when taken as a whole.

Each path on the map has two values attached to it separated by a slash. 'P' designates the journey's Peril TN, a number that describes how likely the heroes are to run into trouble when following that route. The higher the Peril, the greater the risk. See 'Peril' on page 56 for more information. 'T' stands for travel time. The corresponding value is the number of hours of travel required to follow the path from one end to the other. Unless exploration or events within the adventure indicate otherwise, travelling through a given area takes but a single hour; most of the time spent travelling in Moria is taken up in transit between areas.

Mechanics aside, there is an enormous difference between the Narrator knowing where in Moria the heroes are and the heroes knowing it. Just as the Company of the Ring would have been hopelessly lost without Gandalf's half-remembrances of Moria's layout, so too will the heroes need some knowledge of the delving's environs to avoid the same fate. While the characters can wander aimlessly or explore rooms one by one, sane heroes will wish to travel more directly to specific locations. Planning a route to a given destination requires a Lore: Region (Moria) skill test. The base TN and modifiers to it are shown on Table 2.1.

If this test is successful, the Narrator describes the route before it is undertaken. If the character would like to try a different route (to avoid entering a particularly dangerous area, for example) he may. The Narrator simply adjusts the TN to reflect the more circuitous route and the player rolls again. On a disastrous failure at any test to find a route, the character believes he has charted a suitable route, but in reality, has it all wrong: the party of heroes becomes lost at a juncture of the journey determined by the Narrator.

When actually following the route, the character who plotted it must make a Lore: Region (Moria) test for each area as he passes through it. This test is TN 10 for Dwarrowdelf and the Western Deeps and TN 15 for the Mines. On a failure, the group is stuck, not sure which way to turn. Another test may be made in an hour. On a disastrous failure, however, the group heads the wrong way and does not realise it until they arrive in some other area. Successful tests indicate that the hero may continue on.

EXAMPLE: A group of heroes standing outside the Hollin Gate need to make their way to the Fifth Hall. One of their number, a Dwarf who has studied ancient records of Moria, tries to envision a route. The Narrator knows that the Fifth Hall lies in the Second Deep and that the shortest route there leads through the Western Deep and two areas of Upperdeeps. Thus, to puzzle out this route, the Dwarf must roll against TN 15—a base TN 10, plus 5 because the shortest route passes through three additional areas.

Assuming the Dwarf succeeds in this test, the party of heroes presses into the darkness. In the Western Deep area, the Dwarf must make a TN 10 Lore: Region (Moria) test to avoid getting lost. Assuming success, the group presses on into the Redhorn Upperdeeps. There, the test to avoid getting lost is TN 15, because they have entered the Mines region. At this point, if the Dwarf scored a disastrous failure, the party might find itself lost in the Redhorn Lodes, rather than where they want to be in the Silvertine Upperdeeps.

GETTING LOST

It doesn't take long for Dwarven halls to begin to look the same to the weary traveller passing Moria's dark passageways. Characters who become lost due to failed rolls or other circumstances that arise during the story must try to figure out where they are. Doing this requires a Lore: Region (Moria) roll against TN 10. Alternatively, the Narrator may plant clues in the adventure as to the characters' location. For example, ancient records or carved runes might indicate the name of a hall or passage. In any case, once the characters know where they are, they must plot a new course per the rules described above.

In no case whatsoever should heroes without access to ancient maps or other lore of the Dwarves be permitted to examine the maps of Moria in this set. Such concrete detail in the hands of players robs Moria of its mystery and danger.

WEARINESS

Journeying through Moria is trying at best. The air is stale and dusty, the cramped and crumbling halls make it difficult for travellers to stretch their legs and establish a steady pace, and frequent cracks and holes in the floor force characters to jump or climb around them. The darkness, too, is ever-present and dangerous. The shadows of torches distort shapes. Echoes play nasty tricks on travellers. There are few natural frames of reference. Travelling in Moria counts as a Demanding activity for purposes of all Weariness tests.

For all the same reasons, recovering Weariness levels in Moria is also more difficult than in other regions of Middle-earth. Add half again the amount of time normally necessary to regain a Weariness level to the time needed to recover it when in Moira. Thus, for example, recovering from Winded to Hale takes 15 minutes, recovering from Tired to Winded takes an hour and a half, and so on.

FEAR TESTS

Dominated by Shadow, Moria has a dark, terrifying air. Animals refuse to enter the place, and even the hardiest Man or Dwarf feels a sense of unease and tension as he walks within its halls. The Free Peoples are vulnerable to Fear attacks while they are within Moria.

When a servant of the Shadow attempts an Intimidate (Fear) test in Moria, it gains a test bonus based on the region in which it attempts the test. In Dwarrowdelf and the Western Deeps such evil creatures gain a +4 bonus. In the Mines, they gain a +6 bonus.

In addition, the Mines region—including the Upperdeeps, Lodes, Underdeeps, and especially the Balrog's Lair—exerts a subtle, malevolent effect on those who travel through it. Each day a character spends in these areas, he must make a Willpower test (TN 15) to resist fear. On a failure, the character is frightened and suffers a –1 penalty to all tests. With a complete failure, he becomes panicked and suffers a –2 penalty to all tests. On a disastrous failure, the character is unnerved and takes a –4 penalty to all tests. This counts as a fear effect exactly like the penalties a servant of the Shadow can

TABLE 2.1: DESTINATION TNs

DESTINATION IS WITHIN...	BASE TN
Dwarrowdelf	10
Western Deeps	10
Mines	15

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS	TN MODIFIER
Destination is within same area of Moria	–2 TN
Destination is within an adjacent area	0 TN
Shortest route to destination passes through 1 additional area	+2 TN
Shortest route to destination passes through 2-3 additional areas	+5 TN
Shortest route passes through 4 or more additional areas	+10 TN

inflict with the Intimidate (Fear) skill, as described in the core rulebook on page 233. Inspire tests can serve to counter the penalties Moria's atmosphere inflicts on the characters. (See 'Inspire' on page 126 of the core rulebook.)

LIGHT

Moria is dark. Characters who do not bring their own light sources suffer the standard –5 penalty to all physical tests they attempt within the ancient delving. Even those who bring torches and lanterns are in dim lighting, with its own –2 penalty. While it is true that some areas are lit by shafts that reach to the surface, only those of the most ingenious construction can fully eliminate all penalties for dark conditions—and then only when daylight prevails aboveground.

WATER

All of the water found in Moria after its infestation, save for supplies sealed away in Dwarf-casks hundreds of years ago, has turned foul. Orcs, Trolls, and other servants of the Shadow can drink it without fear. However, the Free Peoples and natural animals grow sick, weaken, and eventually die should they consume it. Any water found in Moria counts as a poison with the following attributes:

TYPE: Ingested
ONSET: 6 hours
POTENCY: –5 TN
TREATMENT +5 TN
EFFECT: Reduce Vitality by 1d6
SECONDARY EFFECT: Reduce Vitality by 1/2-d6
STAGES: 6

COMBAT

In a wooded glade or open field, a warrior can swing his blade in wide, graceful arcs to cut down his foes. He can dodge his foes' strikes and move his shield into position to deflect arrows and other attacks. However, in the cramped confines of Moria such freedom of movement is not always possible. Although some areas of Moria are high and expansive, this is not the rule by any stretch of the imagination.

CRAMPED QUARTERS

In cramped quarters, characters who wield Large weapons suffer a –4 penalty to all Armed Combat tests made to attack their foes. Furthermore, on a disastrous failure the attacker accidentally hits an ally, if one is nearby. Roll damage as normal for this strike.

Medium-size characters who fight with Medium weapons in cramped quarters suffer a –2 penalty to their melee attacks. These characters' size combined with their weapons' length makes it difficult for them to utilise their training and skill in tight areas.

Just as Large weapons are less effective in cramped spaces, so too are Large shields difficult to use in such areas. When using a Large shield, a Medium or taller character reduces the parry bonus the shield gains by –2. In addition, the shield imposes a –3, rather than –5, penalty on his foe's attacks.

Small characters, such as Dwarves and Hobbits, ignore these modifiers. They cannot wield Large weapons, and when fighting with Medium arms their short stature compensates for their weapons' length and bulk. Similarly, they gain the full benefit of shields in environments where Men, Elves, and Orcs catch their weapons and equipment on the walls and ceiling.

Ranged combat is also affected by the close quarters in Moria. To reflect this, the test penalties for medium and long range are doubled (to +4 TN and +8 TN, respectively). It is not possible to make shots at extended range in such confines, even when a hero's line of sight would otherwise permit it.

USING MORIA

Moria offers an inexhaustible array of possibilities for adventure, large enough in scope that entire chronicles could easily take place in a fraction of its expanse. This section presents many ideas about how to make use of Moria in your adventures.

TIME PERIODS

The first thing you must decide when planning a Moria chronicle or adventure is when it will take place. A number of options are presented below. Other time periods are certainly possible, but are left to resourceful Narrators.

THE BALROG'S REIGN: In the years before and after the War of Dwarves and Orcs, the Balrog and the Orcs within Moria actively looted the upper halls and established their strongholds deep within the Mines. Increase the Peril TNs for all areas by +10. During this time, the characters have little chance to establish any sort of permanent base within Moria's halls. The Orcs aggressively seek out hidden treasure caches, and conflicts between rival Orc-bands regularly erupt into pitched battles throughout the halls. The characters may be asked to venture into Moria to recover lost Dwarf-artefacts, scout out Orc activity, or recover Dwarf-prisoners taken by raiding Orcs. These adventures should focus on the threat posed by the thousands of Orcs that prowl

Moria. If the characters become caught up in extended battles, the high Peril TNs make it likely the situation will spiral out of control.

In this period (and any others that predate the War of the Ring) Narrators may wish to use the Balrog sparingly, if at all. The reason is simple. When the Company of the Ring entered Moria, they were surprised to discover the identity of Durin's Bane: 'A Balrog . . . now I understand,' muttered Gandalf when they encountered the fearsome creature. If the player characters discover the Balrog and live to tell the tale, Gandalf and the others of the Company would likely have known the true nature of Durin's Bane.

BALIN'S COLONY: When Balin sought to reclaim Moria, both the Orcs and the Balrog had slipped into a relatively inactive state. The army that besieged the Dwarves and eventually defeated them came from outside Moria, indicating that the Orcs at that time had dwindled in numbers. This time period offers rich opportunity for adventure. The characters can operate as Balin's trusted allies, leading expeditions to reclaim portions of Moria, defeat isolated Orc-nests, and track down rampaging Cave-trolls. The emphasis during this time period is on repairing and reclaiming sections of Moria.

THE WAR OF THE RING: After Balin's defeat, the Orcs again grow active within Moria. As Sauron's power slowly increases, the Orcs mind iron and arm themselves for war. While the Balrog rarely ventures far from its lair deep in the Mines, the Orcs regularly come and go from Moria's gates.

During this time period, the emphasis is on investigation and discovery. The Dwarves may ask the heroes to learn what has become of Balin's company, as may Elrond or the Elves of Lórien. By this time, the Watcher in the Water stands guard over the Hollin Gate, a sign of the Shadow's rise that might prompt Gandalf or a friendly Ranger to ask them to investigate Moria. In this time period, the characters may need to seek out the deepest mine depths to spy on the Orcs and determine their purpose and leader. During the War of the Ring, the characters may have to engage in similar missions for Galadriel or Elrond.

AFTER THE WAR OF THE RING: With Sauron defeated and the Balrog slain, Moria seems once again within the reach of Durin's folk. Though Durin the Last remains unborn and most Dwarves are thus unready to launch a full-scale invasion of Moria, small groups of (deluded? valiant?) colonists may seek to enter Dwarrowdelf, carve out a foothold against the Orcs, and set the stage for a campaign of conquest. This time period offers the characters a chance to take part in a heroic epic to lead the Dwarves in the final defeat of Moria's Orcs, restoring the delving of Durin's folk to its lost glory. In contrast to the other time periods, which do not allow for the characters' decisive victory unless the history of Middle-earth is drastically altered, this chronicle can end with the Dwarves' final triumph and Moria's restoration as the most prosperous of the Dwarf-realms.

GENERATIONAL CHRONICLES

While you may find that a single time period fits your needs, you can also design a chronicle that traces the Dwarves' efforts in Moria over several generations. Each piece of the chronicle covers a few adventures during one time period, then leaps by decades and charts a new generation's adventures. Elf-characters will live long enough to take part in each portion of the chronicle, while Dwarves could take part in two or more. Men and Hobbits could be charted through successive generations of a family line. In chronicles such as these, players keep track of one experience point total and apply it to each successive character they play. This way, players of shorter-lived races are not forced to continually create characters with fewer advancements than their Elf or Dwarf counterparts.

The first portion of a generational chronicle might chart a band of heroes' progress through the War of Dwarves and Orcs. The characters could then lead an expedition into Moria, discovering the Balrog's nature and the Orcs' plans for Moria. In the next portion of the campaign, the characters—or their descendants—might help the Rangers or even Gandalf scout and map a path through Moria. When Balin founds his colony, he would almost certainly ask such knowledgable characters to accompany him because of their first-hand experience of the lost regions. Thus, the characters might experience Balin's rise and fall first-hand, perhaps even falling in the final, tragic battle besides their Dwarf-allies. In the chronicle's final arc, the descendants of the fallen heroes might aid the Dwarves in their bid to reclaim Moria once and for all.

When running a generational chronicle, draw concrete connections between generations. One character may leave a journal containing important clues that his grandson uses in his own travels. An Orc-warlord from one time period may give way to a descendant who threatens the heroes' own descendants, perpetuating a feud over centuries. Chambers explored in the chronicle's early eras change over the years.

There is no reason why you must run a generational chronicle in chronological order. An Elf-warrior's prized *mithril* hauberk in one era may provide fodder for an adventure in an earlier era in which the heroes recover the armour and the Elf claims it. A villain who menaces one generation of heroes may have had his genesis in an earlier generation's characters: just as the foul sorcerer prepares to attack the heroes, he tells them of the vengeance he seeks for their ancestors' actions. Once the battle is complete, you run a series of adventures that reveal the villain's origin and connections to the elder heroes. Those events can then tie into future adventures for the latest generation's heroes.

CHRONICLE ELEMENTS

To get the most out of a Moria chronicle, the spirit of the place should be part of every adventure. The following themes are key to imparting this greater sense of Moria.

LURKING DANGERS: Much of the threat Moria poses lies in the constant hint of disaster. When the characters move through Moria, they should always be aware of the threat posed by drawing the Orcs' attention upon them. Stealth and cunning are necessary to survive in Moria. A sharp sword and stout shield can prove useful in a pinch, but the characters should see combat as the result of a mistake, not the primary means to their ends. Emphasise the deathly quiet throughout Moria, and contrast that with the noise the characters make. Even the quiet rustle of mundane equipment echoes through Moria's halls. The Peril system (see page 56) is especially important in bring this aspect of Moria to life.

LOST MAJESTY: Once Moria was the crowning achievement of the Dwarves. Now it is a monument to all they have lost. While its corridors and chambers may be thick with cobwebs and dust, hints of Moria's lost glory always peek through the ruin. A side chamber in which the characters bed down for the night could turn out to be an old work chamber where Moria's greatest craftsmen once toiled. Missions to restore Moria's lost greatness tie perfectly to this theme. A treasure should not be valued for its material worth, but for the symbolic value it holds for the Dwarves.

LIMITED OBJECTIVES: When the Company of the Ring entered Moria, they had a very specific and very limited purpose: to pass through as quickly as possible. Because Moria is so large and dangerous, adventures set within it which fall short of epic attempts to reclaim the entire delving ought to reflect the fact that most adventures into the Deeps have concrete and finite objectives.

EXPLORATION: Moria is a sprawling warren of passages and chambers, the true extent of which even the Dwarves have lost to the march of years. Old maps may show routes long since blocked off or altered by collapsed ceilings, fissures in the floor, or the Orcs' tunnelling and mining. As all Dwarves ultimately hope to one day reclaim Moria, detailed accounts of the changes wrought here will have value until Durin returns once and for all.

CHANGE: Moria is not a static environment. Based on the heroes' actions, the Orcs may establish camps, bolster their patrols, and organise raids on the upper deeps. The Orcs may collapse a corridor that Balin's colony used to reach the Great Gates, while a series of rooms that lay undisturbed for centuries may be thoroughly looted the next time the characters journey through them. Remind the players that Moria is a living environment by altering details both large and small over the course of a chronicle.

THE SHADOW: Sauron and his servants cast a sinister veil over Moria. Lights casts a muted glow, sounds echo and ring too loudly, and the palpable feel of evil hangs thick in the air. While in Moria, the Free Peoples may feel compelled to whisper simply because the atmosphere is so oppressive. The heroes may feel as if hidden eyes watch them.

Instil a sense of paranoid dread in the players by periodically asking for Observe tests, even if no creatures actually watch them. Take a player aside and describe vivid nightmares his character has or strange noises he hears in the distance. When referring to the group, increase their number by one. When the players ask you about it ('What do you mean, "The seven of us?"'), tell them their characters could have sworn that for a moment a shadowy figure walked with them. The Shadow works in subtle ways to dis-

hearten the heroes and sway them from their path.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA: Moria's environment can prove just as daunting as the monsters that dwell there. Describe the tight corridors, the low ceilings, and the tumbled stones that force the characters to slowly pick their way down a passage. Use the rules given above for combat modifiers due to fighting in a tight space. Turn down the lights in your gaming area and force the players to pack tightly around the table.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

To help you start thinking about chronicles and adventures, here are a dozen short adventure seeds to stir your imagination.

PURSUIT INTO MORIA: The characters are chasing a band of criminals who have stolen something important. The thieves enter Moria, forcing the heroes to pursue them through the Orc-infested halls.

THE FATE OF DWARVES: An Orc messenger is captured by Dwarves and offers information about Dwarf-prisoners held in Moria in exchange for its freedom. The Dwarves in question were lost many years ago in a different part of Middle-earth and presumed dead. In reality, though, they have been prisoners for more than a decade, enduring horrible hardships, consuming repulsive Orc-food, and drinking water that drips slowly from air vents. The characters must penetrate Moria to rescue these prisoners. To make matters worse, they must take the Orc with them to ensure they have not been misled.

DEPREDATIONS OF ORCS: The Orcs are active in the region outside one or both of Moria's gates, making highly organised raids against travellers and villages. The characters investigate and discover the creatures originate from Moria. They must enter the Mines, find the Orc-captain who is behind the menace, and defeat him.

LONG-LOST TREASURES: A Dwarf-character inherits a map and journal that reveal the location of a long-lost treasure of the Dwarves. The heroes must organise a prospecting mission into Moria and protect its members from harm.

THE SAFER PASSAGE: While on an urgent mission across the Misty Mountains, the characters are forced into Moria by snowstorms, Orc scouting parties, or some other threat. They must find the shortest passage under the mountains to complete their mission in time.

AN ANCIENT SICKNESS: A friend or ally of the heroes falls ill with a mysterious disease. Research into ancient lore reveals that the Dwarves of Moria once had a cure for the sickness. The character must venture into Moria, find a specific apothecary within Dwarrowdelf's halls, and recover a recipe for the cure.

THE ANCIENT TREATY: An old feud between the Elves and Dwarves threatens to erupt into violence. Both sides blame the other for breaking an ancient pact, but neither party accepts the other's version of the treaty. The characters must descend into Moria, find the Chamber of Records, and deliver the original draft of the treaty to prevent a rift amongst the Free Peoples.

GUIDES IN THE DARK: A small band of Dwarves enlists the characters to help guide them through Moria. In truth, the Dwarves seek to recover an object of great value, but their minds are clouded by greed, and they wish to keep their actions secret from the characters—even other Dwarves.

RESCUERS TO THEIR DOOM: A small band of Men ask the characters to accompany them on a mission to rescue some of their comrades. They claim they were part of a mining expedition to Moria that was attacked by Orcs and forced to leave their friends behind. In truth, the Men are agents of Shadow who regularly lure heroes to their doom in Moria's halls.

MISSING MEN: A group of young woodsmen entered Moria on a dare, hoping to prove their mettle. A week has passed without word from them. The heroes must enter Moria, find the hiding place where the embattled Men have staved off Orc and Troll attacks, and lead them to safety.

THE ANCESTRAL TOMB: A Dwarf-hero's father or grandfather dies, his final wish to be buried in his family's ancestral tomb, which is located within Moria. The characters must enter Dwarrowdelf, locate the ancient tomb, deposit the aged Dwarf's bones, and ensure the Orcs never discover the place.

ORC MIGRATION: Small bands of Orcs have been sighted moving towards Moria. The characters must pursue one of these groups and determine what is drawing the Shadow there and to what purpose. Are the Orcs massing for an attack?

Chapter Three

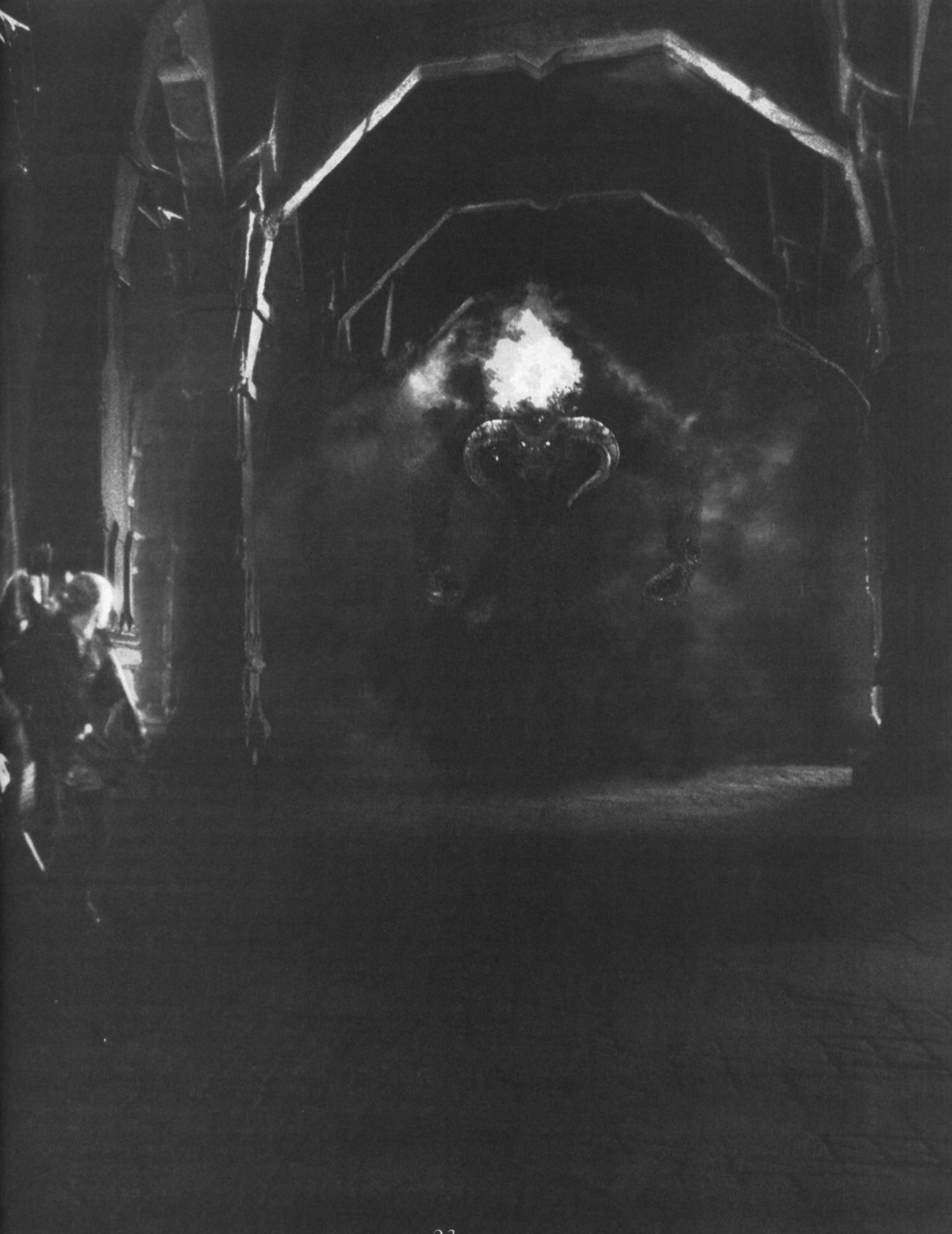
THE GEOGRAPHY OF MORIA

> *'There is the land where our fathers worked of old, and we have wrought the image of those mountains into many works of metal and of stone. . .'*
> *— Gimli, The Fellowship of the Ring*

Moria is vast. It sprawls with endless rooms, tunnels, chambers, galleries, halls, hallways, shafts, stairwells, and more. Rather than attempting to catalogue each, however, this chapter presents Moria's geography in broad strokes. While complete details are given for a few key areas, most parts of the ancient delving are described in general terms. The idea is to give you a base upon which to expand rather than an impenetrable depth of minutiae.

Thus, this chapter serves as a foundation for adventures within Moria. Use it to plot out the general outlines of a given story, then use the systems and information from Chapter Four to flesh out the areas the characters may travel through and the encounters they might have there.

In the pages that follow, the regions immediately outside Moria—both east and west—are described first. Dwarrowdelf is covered next. The First, Second, Twentieth, and Twenty-first deeps are mapped and described in detail. The First and Second halls are close to Moria's entrance and are thus likely to be among the first areas encountered by a group entering from the east. The Twentieth and Twenty-first halls, on the other hand, represent the areas used most extensively by Balin's colony, and so will be of use to Narrators utilising that story as the background of a chronicle. A few notable NPCs from Balin's colony are described as well. The other halls and deep of Dwarrowdelf are described in general terms, allowing Narrators to customise them to their needs. After Dwarrowdelf, the Western Deep and Eastern Axebold areas are detailed.



Because of their proximity to the Hollin Gate entrance, they are mapped and described in detail. Next, Durin's Tower and the Endless Stair are discussed. This section is followed by sections on the Mines region, which comprises the Upperdeeps, Lodes, and Underdeeps. A single sample Orc-camp of the Silvertine Lodes is mapped and described as an example of what might be created by an enterprising Narrator in those areas. A description of the Balrog's lair area rounds out the geography of Moria.

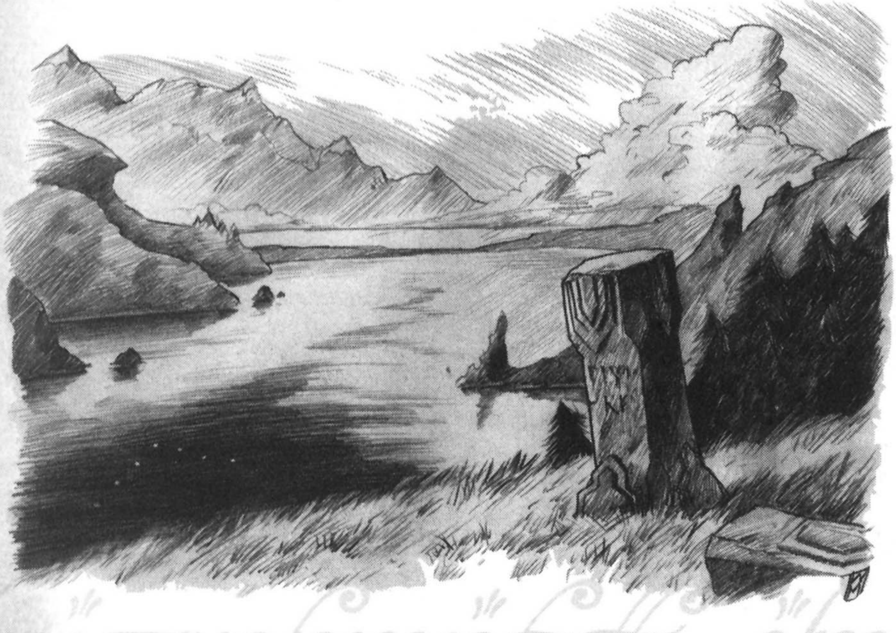
THE EASTERN OUTER REALMS

To the east of Moria lies the Dimrill Dale, a long, wide valley rolling between two outstretched arms of the Misty Mountains. A winding road runs from Moria's gates to the south and east. Tumbled stone ruins and the occasional grassy mound mark where the Dwarves once built watchtowers and other structures along the path. The road consists of little more than a path that winds between cracked stones with long, thick tufts of grass and weeds sprouting between them.

Normally, few Orcs can be found here. Since they hate the sun, when they must leave Moria they travel exclusively by night. However, from a distance, thin plumes of black smoke can be seen drifting from Moria's gates and the mountain slopes above it, a sign of the Orcs' activity within.

THE DIMRILL STAIR: This series of cascading falls feeds the Mirrormere with water from the Misty Mountains. Rather than one large fall, the Dimrill Stair is a series of successive falls that run down the mountain's side. As their name suggests, the falls resemble a stairway formed of water.

MIRRORMERE: This broad, oval-shaped body of water is named for its calm waters, which reflect the sky and surrounding mountain peaks. The Mirrormere holds a special place in the hearts of all Dwarves, for in its waters Durin first saw the starry constellation known as Durin's Crown. In fact, whatever the time of day or position of the clouds above, anyone who stands at Durin's Stone (see below) and looks into the mere sees the same sight Durin did: the mountain peaks reflected against a dark, night sky filled by the glittering constellation. Truly, this stirs the heart and heartens the soul. Any character who spends five or more minutes gazing into the Mirrormere recovers one level of Weariness, though this is only possible once per day. Gazing into the mere is also an excellent way for Dwarves to recover spent Courage points (at the Narrator's discretion) or receive visions of events to come.



DURIN'S STONE: This tall stone plinth marks the point where Durin first looked into the Mirrormere. Once marked with runes, the stone's carvings have long since faded into illegibility.

THE DIMRILL GATE: A wide stone staircase runs up the mountainside to the towering archway that marks the primary entrance into Moria's dark halls, known as the Great Gate as well as the Dimrill Gate. The doors themselves have been cast down, leaving the First Hall, which lies immediately beyond them, open to the elements.

THE PYRE: During the War of the Dwarves and Orcs, a great battle was fought in Dimrill Dale. Though the Dwarves won the final victory of the war in that conflict, their losses were so great they were forced to burn their dead on the field of battle rather than entomb them, as is their tradition. At the site of this pyre, the Dwarves gathered their dead, collected their weapons and armour, and burned them to ashes. A wide patch of grey soil, some 30 yards across, where no plants have taken root to this day, still marks the place the fire burned, a testament to the many Dwarves who fell in that battle.

THE WESTERN OUTER REALMS

To the west of Moria once stood the realm of Hollin, peopled by Elves. The Dwarves conducted much trade with Hollin, and both realms grew prosperous through their dealings. During the War of the Elves and Sauron, Hollin was destroyed. Since then, the region west of Moria has been a wilderness.

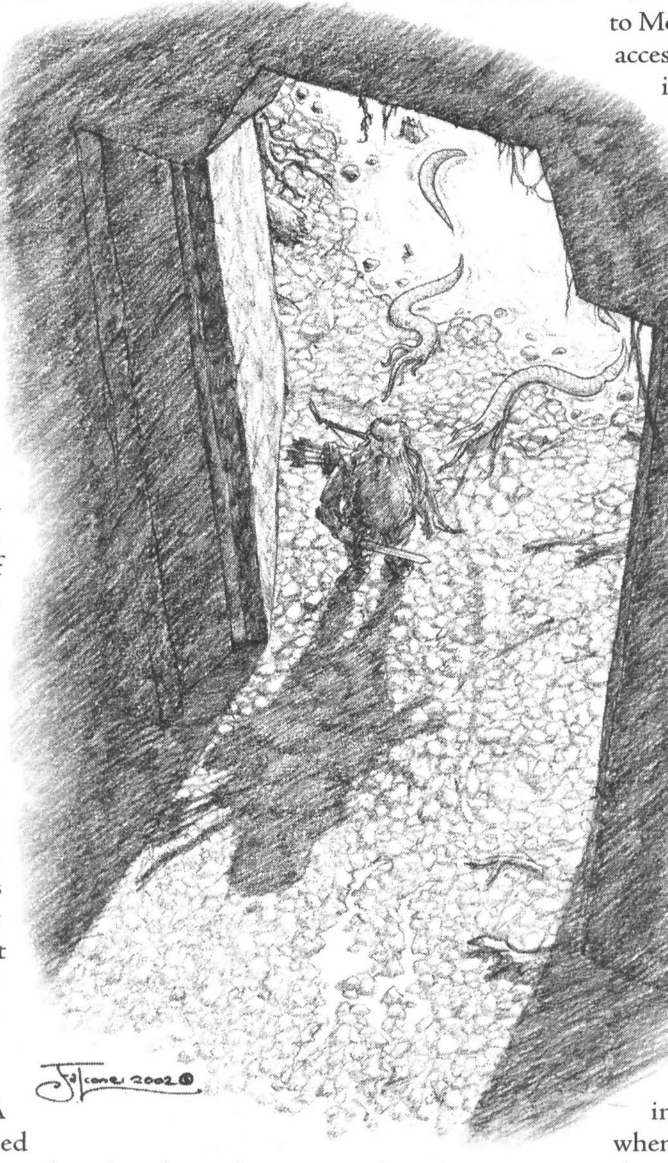
HOLLIN GATE: Built by the combined crafts of the Elves and Dwarves, this enchanted gate may only be opened by speaking the word *mellon*, which is Sindarin for 'friend.' The door is not normally visible. Only by first speaking the words of revealing—the phrase 'For peace and commerce' in Sindarin—or by casting the spell *Ithildin-fire* does the door reveal its outline. Any hero with an appropriate Lore skill knows this phrase on a successful test against TN 10.

The gate appears as a design wrought in *ithildin* depicting the emblems of Durin, the Tree of the High Elves, and the Star of the House of Fëanor. Sindarin letters read 'The Doors of Durin, Lord of Moria. Speak, friend, and enter.' The gate stands between two tall holly trees, the only landmarks that give any clue as to its location.

HOLLIN ROAD: This pathway, now overgrown with weeds and grass—and long since faded—runs alongside the Sirannon. It strays from the stream as it approaches the falls, and there it winds up a curving, gentle slope carved into the cliff face.

THE POOL: Until TA 2994, the Sirannon flowed from the mountains to the north and down to the falls. Soon after Balin founded his colony, however, the Orcs dammed the stream to block off the western exit. The water level at that time was high enough to block all access to the Hollin Gate, but within a few years it receded enough to reveal a narrow strip of land along its edges. The Watcher in the Water (see pages 84–5) lurks here, guarding the gate against all intruders.

SIRANNON: Known as the Gate-stream, its waters ran fast and deep until the Orcs dammed the falls. Since then, the stream became little more than a trickle running down a narrow channel of brown and red stones.



STAIR FALLS: Before the damming of the Sirannon, the waters ran over the cliffs here in a foamy cascade. Now, barely a trickle drips down the cliff's face. A set of stairs are cut into the rock beside the falls, while the main road winds up a much gentler slope to the north.

OTHER ENTRANCES

While the Hollin and Dimrill Gates are the obvious entrances to Moria, they are not the only ways to access the depths. While its existence is not widely known, Durin's Tower (see page 49) stands at the top of the Endless Stair and is a third option. There are more possibilities besides. Many of the Halls of Dwarrowdelf and the Western Deeps are lit by shafts that reach to the surface. While the mouths of these shafts would be difficult to find, harder to descend, and protected by strong Dwarf-grates and ancient traps, they may prove more inviting than other options. Ancient aqueducts that provided water are a similar possibility. Finally, the Orcs continue to mine the deeps as their occupation of Moria continues. They could easily have dug out additional entrances to the mountains, an option that would dovetail nicely with adventures whose purpose is to perform reconnaissance and find out more about Orc-raids. These options for entering Moria will prove strongest when tied to specific adventures, and thus, are best fleshed out by Narrators as those adventures are created.

DWARROWDELF

The city of Moria proper, Dwarrowdelf holds the ancient mansions, workshops, storage chambers, and public courtyards used by the Dwarves in Moria's past. This region is largely uninhabited: the Orcs dwell in the Mines region and the Balrog spends much of its time in uneasy slumber in its lair, rousing itself only to receive tribute from the Orcs or to crush any who dare enter Moria's halls.

Seven deeps compose Dwarrowdelf, each of them a single level comprising three halls and the smaller chambers and passageways that supported those halls. Each deep served a particular function, though as Moria grew over time, each took on a few similar characteristics.

Of the deeps, the First and Seventh receive the most detail in this chapter. The others are described more generally.

THE FIRST DEEP

Located at the Great Gate and including Durin's Bridge, the First Deep served as Moria's primary line of defence against invaders sweeping up from the east through Dimrill Dale. During happier times, the Dimrill Gate stood open at all hours as traders from distant points came and went. The First and Second Halls of the First Deep are depicted on the poster map included in this set. The descriptions in this section refer to those maps.

Of the regions of Dwarrowdelf, the Orcs are most active here. They commonly travel through the First Deep to venture to the outer world in search of food and plunder. While the First Deep has fallen into disrepair, it lacks the thick layers of dust and other signs of abandonment found throughout the upper portions of Moria.

THE FIRST HALL

The following text corresponds to locations illustrated on the map labelled 'First Hall.'

1–1. THE FIRST HALL: The main entryway to Moria, this hall was the first tunnel carved into the mountain by the Dwarves many centuries ago. The First Hall served as a marketplace, as traders from as far as Gondor came to bargain for the Dwarves' finely crafted wares. What was once a brightly lit, welcoming threshold is now a dark, foreboding vault in the mountain's side. For a time, Balin and his folk dwelt here, but their initial successes in exploring the upper halls led them to seek shelter further within Moria.

Debris and dirt from outside are thick on the floor, as the Dimrill Gate has stood open since the destruction of its doors. Rain, snow, and wind have worn away the once carefully maintained marble floor of the First Hall. Dried leaves, pine needles, bird droppings, and other debris are thick around the entrance, and even the hall's far ends shows cracks, pitting, and wear. The high-vaulted ceiling is thick with cobwebs, while the once-elegant pillars are now little more than rough stone plinths. What was long ago the entry gate to one of Middle-earth's most prosperous realms is now little more than a filthy mountain cave.

1–2. STORAGE HALLS: While the Dwarves occupied Moria, they used these cavernous chambers to store the food, drink, and other critical supplies brought to their realm by farmers and traders who exchanged great quantities of foodstuffs for the merest baubles the Dwarf-craftsmen offered. These rooms still hold rotting mountains of grain and other supplies. When the Dwarves fled Moria, they had little time to properly pack the bulky, relatively inexpensive goods kept here.

The Orcs find grain and other vegetables utterly unpalatable, so they left the stores here to rot. Cave rats and other vermin infest these chambers. Yet, rumours persist of a small group of Dwarves who, suspecting the Orcs would care little for the food stores, buried their treasures beneath the grain.

1–3. THE HOMELY HALL: When traders and merchants visited Moria, they spent days in meetings with Dwarf-craftsmen, bartering for their goods. While they were Moria's guests, these visitors stayed within the comforting chambers of the Homely Hall. The main hall of this place holds plush, velvet couches, a long dining table, and several fireplaces vented to the First Hall. A kitchen set in the south-west portion of this complex prepared meals for visitors, while the dormitories to the south and east provided comfortable quarters.

The Orcs use this chamber as a guardroom to keep watch over the Grand Gate. While this place was abandoned during Balin's time, in most other periods between eight and twelve Orcs dwell here. At least three stand watch from the raised platform just outside these doors. When intruders appear, one Orc rushes to the west to raise a general alarm, while the remaining two rouse their companions.

THE SECOND HALL

The following text is illustrated on the map labelled 'Second Hall.'

1–4. DURIN'S BRIDGE: This long, narrow stone bridge connects the First Hall to the rest of Moria. The Dwarves planned to use the bridge as a choke point against invading armies, never suspecting that their doom would emerge from the Mines below. The bridge ranges from eight feet wide at either end to slightly over five feet near the middle. The abyss it spans drops thousands of feet down below even the lowest mine levels.

The bridge holds a sinister reputation amongst the Orcs, as over the years many have slipped from it to their deaths—or been pushed by rivals. When pursuing enemies, any Orc without advancements must make a Willpower test (TN 10) or refuse to cross the bridge until his foes are well out of sight. Even then, such

Orcs move across at half their normal speed.

1–5. THE SECOND HALL: A critical juncture in Moria's layout, the Second Hall provides direct access to some of the most important places within Dwarrowdelf. Its proximity to the Mines guarantees the presence of at least a small Orc-patrol. Apply a –4 result modifier to Peril tests made within this chamber.

In contrast to the First Hall, little debris fouls this room beyond a thick layer of dust in the corners and outer reaches. A wide crevice that drops ten feet into the floor cuts through the hall, but beyond that the Second Hall remains intact.

The Dwarves discovered a wide, natural fissure here that they enlarged and finished over the years. In some spots, naturally rough stone can still be seen high along the walls. The 40-foot-high ceiling here is of plain, unworked stone that extends from the abyss spanned by Durin's Bridge.

THE THIRD HALL (not mapped) is west of and below the Second Hall. This great chamber served as a gateway between the Mines and Moria's upper levels. Compared to the other halls, the ceiling here is low and cramped at merely 15 feet above the floor.

The corridors and galleries around the Third Hall were storage chambers for freshly dug ore, tool sheds, and temporary housing for miners. The most notable chamber in this area is the Leeches' Hall, a series of rooms set aside for the care of miners injured in cave-ins and other mishaps. In addition to this chamber's main hall of healing, several storage rooms here house sealed urns filled with healing herbs, unguents, and poultices.

Owing to the Dwarves' cunning craftsmanship, many of these urns remain sealed and have kept their contents fresh. Anyone with access to these supplies gains a +3 bonus to Healing tests. There is enough material here to aid 40 such tests, after which the supplies are exhausted. A single urn holds eight doses of healing materials and weighs six pounds.

THE SECOND DEEP

This level consists primarily of workshops and forges. Ore extracted from the Mines of Moria once arrived here in crude form and left in finely formed bars for the workshops and treasure vaults of Moria. A vast number of pipes, shafts, and narrow passages head from these halls of the Second Deep to the mountain's eastern face. On most days, a steady stream of smoke originating from this deep crept up from Moria, a consistent landmark used by travellers in the surrounding desolation to mark their path.

Overall, the Second Deep is in perhaps the worst state of all of Dwarrowdelf. In their zeal to steal the Dwarves' treasures, the Orcs dug holes and trenches in the floors and walls here, searching for hidden vaults. Furthermore, at the behest of their masters, the Orcs removed many of the forges and other tools here and transported them to the Mines for their own use. Some regions of twisting passages and smaller work chambers have been completely dug out, transformed into wide, crude caverns by the Orcs.

THE FOURTH HALL was used as a temporary storage area into which the Dwarves pulled great wooden carts laden with ore from the Mines. Grooved tracks in the floor allowed carts to be more easily pushed up the gentle, sloping passages from the Mines. When returning carts to the

Mines, the Dwarves simply fitted them back on to the tracks and pushed them back down. Whilst most of the carts have been long since reduced to splinters, the effort of an hour or so might allow a group of heroes to assemble a single working cart from the wreckage.

THE FIFTH HALL is a vaulted, circular chamber. In its centre is a small public square once decorated with statues and memorials to famed Dwarf-craftsmen. Dozens of doorways, all leading to individual workshops, ring the hall's edge. Craftsmen with the experience and prestige to earn their own shops worked here. Each work area consists of a central chamber with forges, bellows, workbenches, and other bulky pieces of equipment. Smaller storage rooms connected to the work area held ore, wood, spare tools, and other necessary equipment. The workshops and storage rooms of this hall have been utterly looted, and contain almost nothing save broken tools and the trash of Orcs.

THE SIXTH HALL was used by apprentices who forged the ingots and minor goods traded to Men and other outsiders. This place is filled with dozens of stone workbenches and several large forges. Two wide light shafts pierce the ceiling, illuminating the hall and drawing out smoke from the forges. The chambers around this hall were lecture halls, smaller workshops, and dormitories reserved for the apprentices.

The large lecture halls are equipped with workbenches and forges. They are all connected via passages to a large library with three levels, which served as the centre of learning for young craftsmen. Despite the Orcs' efforts, some volumes on metalcraft and other arts remain in usable condition. Some of these books detail arts long thought lost, and are treasures of incomparable worth to the Dwarves.

THE THIRD DEEP

Personal chambers, feast halls, and small estates compose most of the Third Deep, the first residential area of Dwarrowdelf. A cramped, crowded section of the Dwarf-city, this area served as Moria's only living area until the Sixth and Seventh Deeps were built.

THE SEVENTH, EIGHT, AND NINTH HALLS are giant caverns, each uniformly 30 feet in height and nearly 800 feet square. Dwarf-houses, shops, and other structures were built as free-standing structures within them from stone bricks.

For many years, the Third Deep was the only residential portion of Moria available to craftsmen, soldiers, miners, and labourers. While powerful mercantile families and Moria's royalty dwelt on the Fifth Deep, the great mass of Moria's common Dwarves made their homes here. As Moria's population grew, however, the structures in these three halls crowded more and more against each other. The once orderly grid of streets was overwhelmed. When there was no more room for new structures, Dwarf-families added additional floors to their existing dwellings to accommodate successive generations within the family, or kin who migrated from distant realms. In fact, many of the buildings in these halls demonstrate different architectural styles from floor to floor, reflecting the tastes of the different generations of Dwarves who built them.

The current state of the many buildings within the Seventh, Eight, and Ninth Halls varies widely. All obvious treasures have been looted, but many Dwarven families were cunning in hiding their valuables, so some secret treasures may remain. Few of the structures have ever been occupied by Orcs, so while they have been sacked, they are not, for the most part, full of the filth of Orc habitation.

In addition to its residential role, the Eighth Hall—a choke point for access to this and higher levels—served as a second line of defence. In the event an enemy force pierced the Dimrill Gate and seized Durin's Bridge, the Dwarves planned to rally here and use the narrow, twisting passages to their advantage. The tight lanes and confusing streets here would force an attacking army to break up into smaller pieces or to advance along a narrow line, allowing the Dwarves to launch counter-attacks that would mire the foe's advance.

To this end, the upper armouries of the Eighth Hall were outfitted with a great store of mail, mattocks, axes, shields, and other supplies. These upper armouries were so named because of their position high along the walls of the Eighth Hall. In the event of an attack, the Dwarves would use ladders to climb up to the armouries' hidden doors, recover their items, and then use the vaults as observation platforms to watch for enemy advance and rain missile fire down upon them. While the Orcs have discovered and ransacked several of these storage vaults, many of them remain undisturbed.

THE FOURTH DEEP

Located at the centre of Dwarrowdelf, the Fourth Deep served as a gathering place for the Dwarves. Shops, marketplaces, drinking halls, and other establishments dotted the halls and passages of this level. During holidays and other festive occasions, Dwarves packed the halls of the Fourth Deep.

For a time, a large band of Orcs dwelt here, using the Fourth Deep as a central base from which to launch salvage and looting expeditions into the rest of Dwarrowdelf. Signs of their occupation are stronger here than elsewhere in Moria's upper levels, with shattered Orc-blades, rent armour, filth, and other debris scattered in their wake. Orc-remains, most decayed to skeletons, can regularly be found in side passages and out-of-the-way chambers. Many feuds or arguments turned violent and set bands of Orcs against one another in battle here.

THE TENTH HALL was renowned for its mead halls and feasting courts. As the Tenth Hall is easternmost of the Fourth Deep's three halls, the Dwarves constructed a myriad array of vents, pipes, and outlets for large kitchens and breweries. For the vast majority of Moria's inhabitants, the Tenth Hall was the centre of their social lives, where Dwarf-chefs and brewmasters dedicated themselves to their arts with the same exacting fervour as Dwarf-smiths, gemcutters, and other artisans. 'When we share a drink in the Tenth' is a Dwarf-saying that refers to any distant, likely unattainable, but nevertheless desirable event.

Set in a single cavern measuring 500 feet along each side, the Tenth Hall is a dense warren of smaller structures, similar to those found in the Third Deep. The streets radiate outward from a central, circular space, the Tankard Gard, used to host large-scale celebrations. The side streets form a warren of cramped lanes and passages. The Dwarves joked that only a drunken sot could navigate the confusing twists of streets, because an equally drunk Dwarf had designed them.

The Tankard Gard holds a small, circular, raised platform in its centre that served as a stage for gatherings. Two shafts carved in the ceiling directly above the area fed light to this place, and at one time hundreds of lanterns hung from the ceiling by long iron chains and provided illumination. While the lanterns have long since been pillaged, many of the chains remain.

THE ELEVENTH HALL was a central trade-moot (meeting place) for all of Dwarrowdelf. Food, water, and other supplies were sold and distributed here to the Dwarves. While any Dwarf dwelling within Moria could count on meals served in communal eating halls built within Moria's residential district, exotic foodstuffs from distant lands—or specially made goods, such as sticky pastries or finely brewed beer—could be purchased here. In addition, Dwarves bartered with one another for the fruits of their labours. A Dwarf-miner could trade his ore to a craftsman who was too old to work in the Mines, while a toymaker might trade some of his wares for finely crafted tools.

The Eleventh Hall is a single, circular yard with a radius of 100 feet. Wood and stone booths were once arranged in concentric circles here, with the most luxurious goods offered near the hall's centre and progressively less expensive wares sold on its outer edges. All that remains of these structures are piles of rotted wood, shattered stone, and loose debris punctuated by lonely stone booths standing here and there.

THE TWELFTH HALL is a sharp contrast to the other sections of the Fourth Deep. The smallest of Dwarrowdelf's halls, this square chamber runs 50 feet along each side, but extends nearly 80 feet upwards. Seven levels of stone platforms and the stairs along the hall's walls that provide access to them make up the Tombs of Dwarrowdelf, the communal burial chambers of Moria. The families of royalty are entombed in the uppermost levels, while common Dwarves of little distinction fill the lowest levels. Artisans, minor nobles, and other Dwarves of moderate distinction lie in the middle, with their exact placement depending on their families' histories and their achievements in life.

Words fail to describe the solemn majesty of this chamber. Even with the coming of the Orcs and their depredations, the hall retains an air of respect mixed with sorrow that overwhelms the normal modifiers to Fear tests within Moria. Such is the power of the room's presence that anyone who seeks to defile the craftsmanship of the place—or the revered dead it holds—must make a Willpower test (TN 15) or suffer a –4 penalty to all skill tests within this area. The Twelfth Hall cows even the despicable Orcs, who made only half-hearted efforts to rob the place. While few treasures can be found here, the Dwarves' remains and the artwork wrought in this area are largely undisturbed.

Each tomb is guarded by a grim curse inscribed upon its door. Each of these maledictions inflicts its magic on whomever robs the tomb. Two examples follow; others may be invented at need.

'In seeking wealth, find only sorrow. He who despoils this threshold brings doom upon his line:' One member of the thief's family dies each year until the stolen materials are returned.

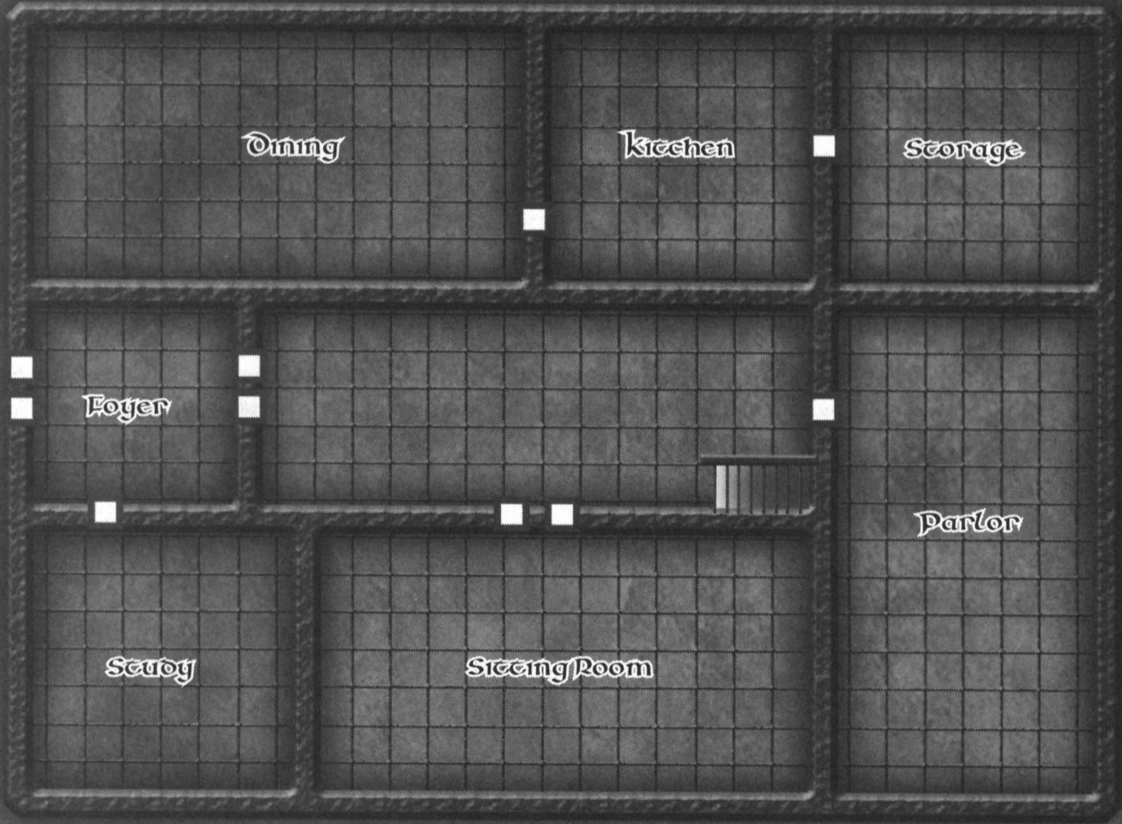
'Gold flees from the grasping hand:' The thief forever loses money despite his efforts to keep it. Holes open in his belt pouches and robbers strike his home. Each month, he loses half the total wealth in goods and coins he has accumulated.

THE FIFTH DEEP

At one time, the Fifth Deep was the seat of power in Moria. When the Sixth and Seventh Deeps were added above the Fifth to keep up with Dwarrowdelf's steady rate of growth, however, the council halls and mansions of Moria's most powerful families were relocated to the Seventh Deep. In the aftermath of that move, the Fifth Deep became a dwelling area. After years of making do with only the halls of the Third Deep, Moria's Dwarves were happy for the chance to move into larger, more comfortable dwellings.

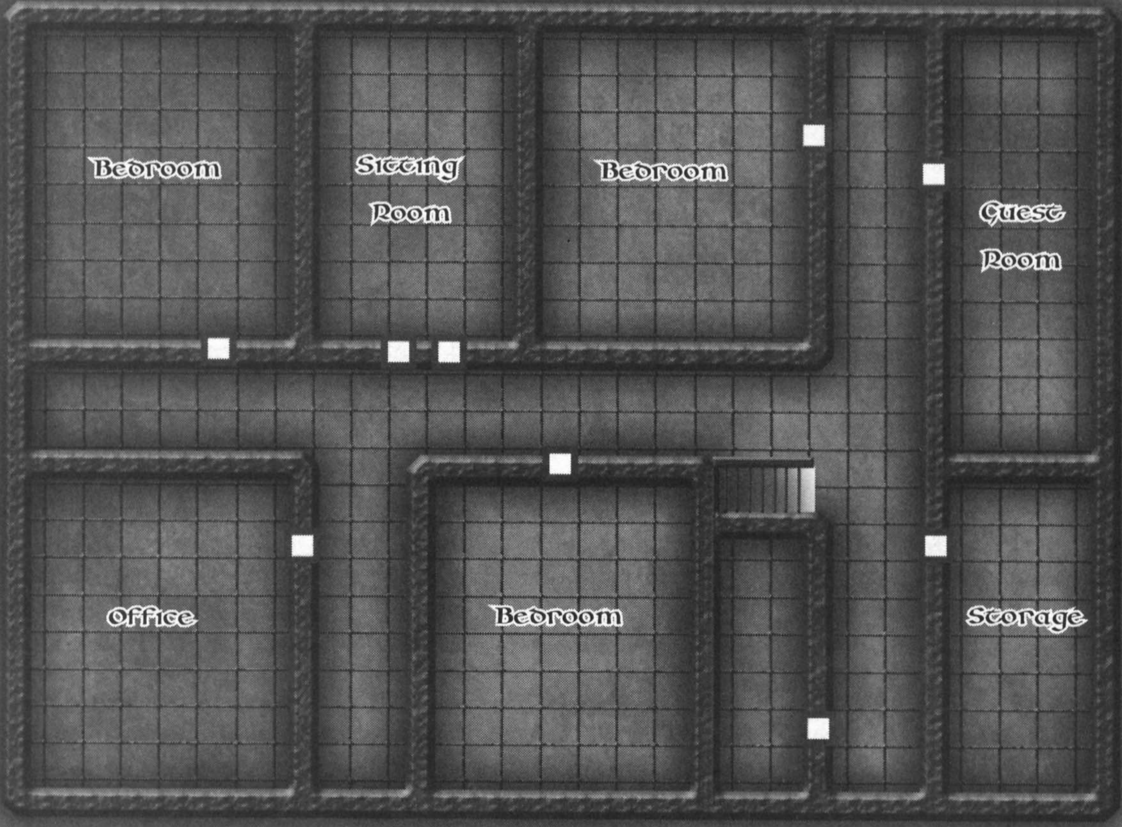
THE THIRTEENTH HALL, commonly referred to as the East End, served for a time as the enclave of Moria's richest Dwarves. Several light shafts

TYPICAL DWARF MANSION


Dining
Kitchen
Storage
Foyer
Parlor
Study
Sitting Room

Bottom Floor

1 Square = 1 Yard


Bedroom
Sitting Room
Bedroom
Guest Room
Office
Bedroom
Storage

Top Floor

provide dull illumination for the entire hall, enough to support a small park with thin mountain grass and a reflecting pool. When the most powerful nobles moved up to the Sixth and Seventh Deeps, many of the massive buildings in this area were cleared away to make room for the smaller, more modest dwellings of the common Dwarves who moved here in their wake.

The Fourteenth Hall contained the homes of many of the miners who toiled in Moria's deepest passages. Unique amongst the halls for its shape and layout, this hall was expanded several times over the course of its history. While Moria's other halls were built in square or rectangular shapes, the Fourteenth was slowly converted to the shape of a cross. Two long, narrow expansions carved to the east and west of the original central hall give it this distinctive shape.

The buildings erected here are sturdy even by Dwarf-standards. Even after abandonment, years of neglect, and Orc occupation, these buildings stand in good condition. During Balin's time, he sent regular patrols here in hopes of sweeping the place of threats and securing it for the host of settlers he hoped would follow him.

The Fifteenth Hall was where many craftsmen, warriors, and merchants founded their hearths. While this hall was as crowded as the other halls of the Fifth and Third Deeps, Moria's leaders experimented here with a novel solution to their population growth. By carving ramps, stairs, and platforms into the walls of the cavernous hall, they added additional layers of living space wrought from the rock itself. One layer of homes would be mined from the rock, and these galleries' roofs served as a platform that reached up to the next layer of dwellings, forming successive steps on the northern and southern ends of the hall. While initially popular, this measure proved untenable as a long-term solution because it reduced the hall's structural integrity.

The Fifteenth Hall's most striking features are the small crystal groves scattered throughout the hall. These were carefully carved and regularly spaced to reflect and splinter light, allowing a single lantern to provide illumination for an entire quarter of the hall. During waking hours, the Fifteenth Hall could be bathed in the equivalent of sunlight if enough large, bright lanterns were properly placed.

THE SIXTH DEEP

Along with the Seventh Deep, this section of Dwarrowdelf was built much later than the rest of Moria. Originally, the five deeps below it served as a home for the Dwarves, but over time Moria's increasing population and prosperity resulted in the creation of the Sixth and Seventh Deeps, along with the eventual expansion to a new region, the Western Deeps. In return for donating labour, supplies, and treasure for the creation of these new areas, a Dwarf earned the right to found a mansion in them.

Currently, these halls stand quiet and empty. Occasionally, rogue bands of Orcs lair here for a while, hoping to waylay and rob other Orcs that wander here from the Mines, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

The Sixteenth Hall was popularly known as the Upper East End and was populated by some of the most prosperous, influential Dwarves of the mountain. Inspired by the attempts to expand the Fifteenth Hall, most of the living quarters here were built into the walls themselves. By transferring living space from stone mansions built on the hall's floor to the walls, the Dwarves constructed a large, open space ringed with mansions carved into the rock. Each living hall features an elaborate facade worked into the stone around its entrance and outer windows. Each individual mansion is narrow but tall, roughly 10 to 20 feet across and up to eight stories tall.

A large, wide garden of thick, soft soil with a miniature lake occupies the centre of this hall. Three narrow light shafts allow the sun to reach this place, though even on a summer's day the light here rarely grows brighter than a faint, dim grey.

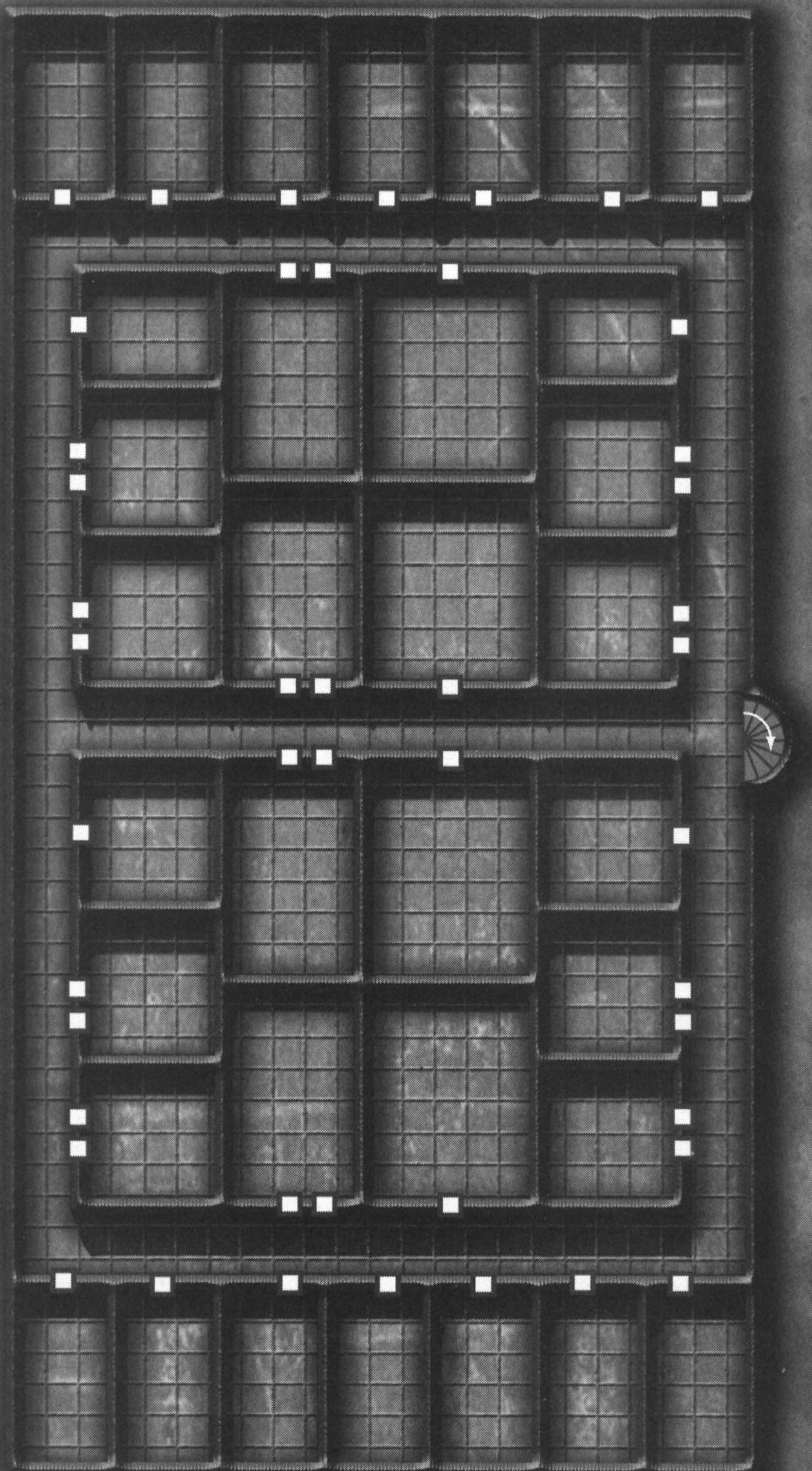
The Seventeenth Hall is a large cavern divided into sixteen individual plots, each separated by a stone wall that ranges from a single foot tall to over 10 feet in height. Within each section are a stone mansion and attendant outbuildings carved to accommodate a powerful, influential Dwarf-family. Within Moria's tight confines, the prospect of owning such an open space appealed greatly to the Dwarves and helped prompt many of them to accept a move from their old homes in the Fifth Deep below. These structures were carved from the rock itself. The sixteen estates are arranged in four rows. A grid of narrow avenues runs between them. Silver gates provide access to the estates.

The Eighteenth Hall was once an armoury that held weapons and armour ranging from siege weapons to simple daggers, from leather jerkins to *mithril* shirts. While the Dwarves each crafted and maintained their personal weapons, the supplies kept here were meant for use in times of war. Siege engines and other large weapons were kept disassembled here. If Moria came under attack, the armaments here were distributed to every Dwarf.

While referred to as a hall, the armoury consisted of twenty levels of large chambers stacked atop one another. Each level is shaped like a blocky figure eight, with the central areas holding twenty vaults each and the outer areas ringed with vaults 10 feet wide and 15 feet deep. A single spiral staircase allows access to each level. A single sample level is depicted on the map labelled '18th Hall.'

18th Hall

One of twenty levels



1 Square = 1 Yard

Not long after the Orcs' arrival, these armouries yielded their treasure to them, but not without a steep price. As part of the preparation for their flight, the Dwarves sowed this area with many deadly traps, carried off those weapons and armour small and light enough to pack, and destroyed much of what remained. After many Orcs died trying to open vaults that more often than not held little of value, they abandoned their efforts here. Thus, a few of the vaults here still hold valuable weapons and armour undisturbed by the invaders. The Dwarves' traps still remain, too, and no record was made of their locations, purpose, or design. Full rules for traps in Moria start on page 59.

THE SEVENTH DEEP

The uppermost of Dwarrowdelf's seven levels, this deep served as the seat of Durin's rule and held its most exclusive enclaves. Durin and his family dwelt here, as did many of the most renowned craftsmen and the most revered families.

THE NINETEENTH HALL

Commonly known as the South End, this hall was positioned just south of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Halls. The largest of the Seventh Deep's halls, this place was used as living quarters for two distinct groups of Dwarves. On one hand were the civil servants who worked within the Twenty-first Hall—servants and hirelings with families dwelling in the smaller, more exclusive Twentieth Hall. On the other were merchants, craftsmen, and other Dwarves of means who chose to live here because of its proximity to Moria's most respected inhabitants.

The hall's arrangement reflects this divide. The eastern end—home of the prosperous merchants—is set with many light shafts and open squares, with tall buildings of sturdy construction. The living quarters in the hall's western half are smaller and more tightly clustered. Passages from the main hall lead to small workshops, storage areas, and a small amphitheatre.

THE HALL OF SONG: Located at the heart of the Nineteenth Hall, this amphitheatre forms a bowl 40 feet deep at its centre. It once hosted plays, concerts, and other events. Concentric rings of stone benches surround a wide, raised, marble stage.

THE TOY-MAKERS' HALL: While Dwarf-toys are likely the least potent of Durin's folk's products, their popularity with children across Middle-earth made them one of Moria's most profitable exports. When the Orcs claimed this area, however, they failed to see the toys as anything more than useless baubles. Thus, a rather large store of ancient Dwarf-toys can be found in this guildhall.

The hall itself is an unremarkable building in the Nineteenth Hall's eastern end. While the Orcs smashed many of the toys out of sheer spite, a number of them still function properly. Now, a lone Cave-troll has taken the hall as its lair. Having escaped its Orc-captors, the simple, violent brute spends most of its time hunting for Orcs in the lower deeps or playing in rapt fascination with the toys it has discovered. Needless to say, the Troll reacts violently to any who attempt to steal from its lair.

THE TWENTIETH HALL

In Moria's glorious past, the Twentieth Hall attracted the hearths of Moria's wealthiest, most revered families. The heirs of Durin's line made their home here in a great mansion, as did those whose families were renowned for their skill at the forge, in trade, or in other talents prized by the Dwarves. Many of the same Dwarves who held court in the Twenty-first Hall lived within this area.

The chambers in this area have more light shafts than other regions of Moria, which causes the Orcs to avoid it more than they otherwise might.

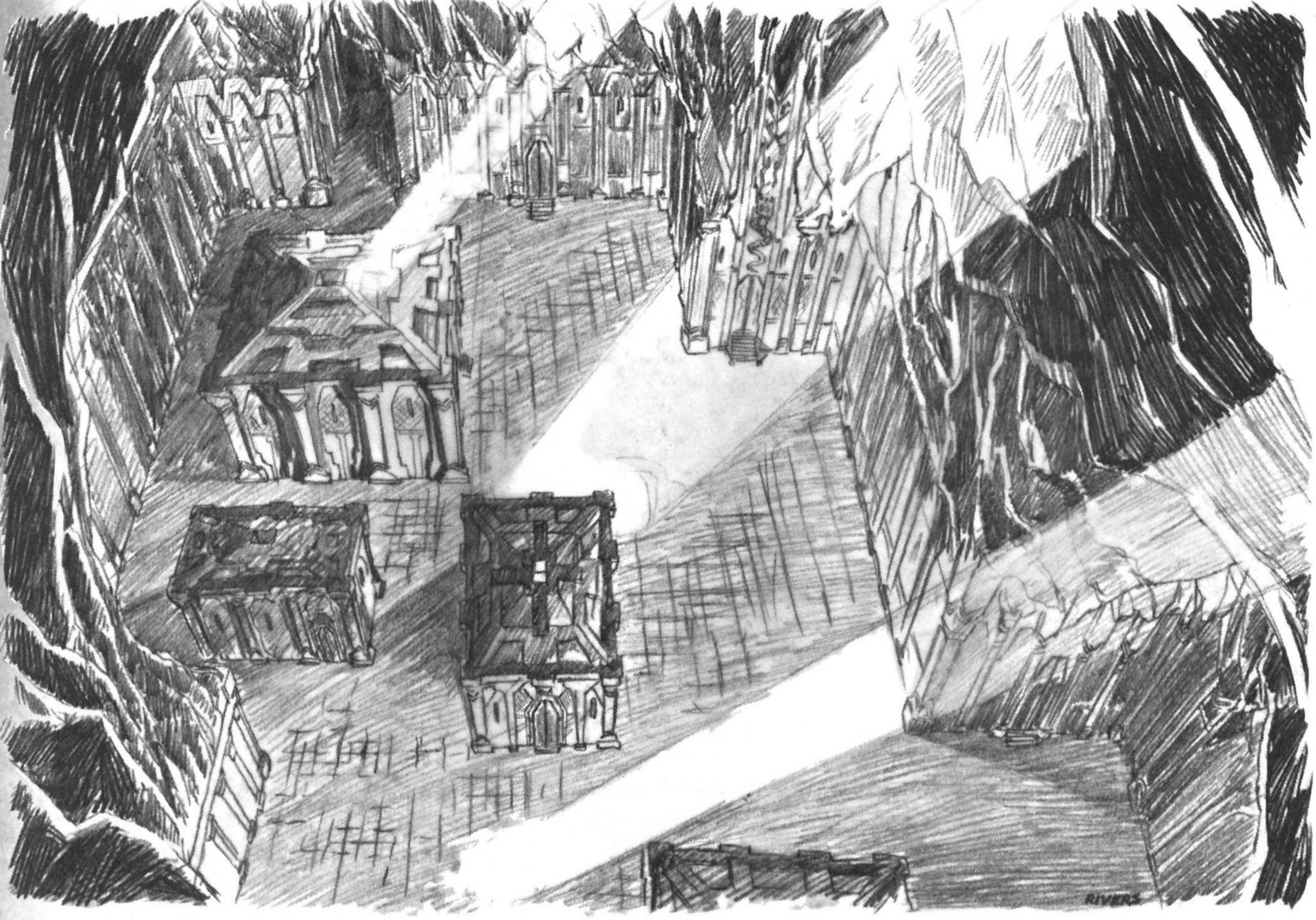
Since the Orcs of Moria originally despoiled this area many centuries past, they have only rarely returned. Balin's expedition made a cursory effort to patrol the Twentieth Hall, but preferred to focus on fortifying the Twenty-first Hall and making efforts to re-establish the Mines and recover lost treasures.

The histories of the mansions here are well known, and as Balin did not wish to be known as a usurper or thief, he and his followers took care to avoid asserting ownership over these chambers. Many powerful and important Dwarves now scattered throughout Middle-earth have legitimate claims to them as their inheritances.

The following locations correspond to the map labelled 'Twentieth Hall.'

7–1. THE GRAND STAIR: This wide, winding staircase served as the main point of access from the Seventh Deep's North End to the lower layers of Dwarrowdelf. The Orcs make common use of this way, making it dangerous for parties of travellers to stick to the main passages. While the characters travel along this path, any Peril tests they make have a –2 test modifier due to the stair's heavy use by Moria's current inhabitants.

7–2. TRADE BROTHERHOOD OFFICES: When Moria was a bustling centre of commerce, these chambers were alive with activity at almost any time of day or night. Working in conjunction with the Artisan's Guild to the west, the Dwarf-merchants of Moria helped set prices for trade goods and brokered deals between Moria's craftsmen and the Elves and Men of Middle-earth. The floor in each of these rooms featured a pattern of stone slabs set to resemble a large, silver anvil, the trademark of the Dwarf Trade Brotherhood. The Orcs—predictably—have gouged the silver from the floor.



The smaller rooms adjoining these chambers were used for private work and small meetings. They are devoid of contents beyond a few smashed stone furnishings. A safe secreted somewhere within these chambers could hold the key to recovering a great deal of Moria's riches. The Trade Brotherhood set up several hidden vaults in the Western Deep's Trade-moot and in the First Hall, near the Dimrill Gate. The heroes could uncover a map here that pinpoints a few secret compartments once used to hold the most expensive wares the Dwarves made available to visiting traders.

7–3. THE TWENTIETH HALL OF THE NORTH END: This great, vaulted hall is brightly lit by Moria's standards. Half a dozen light shafts pierce the ceiling, allowing the sun to bathe this room in dull, ambient light. During the height of Moria's power, this hall was the wealthiest and most important hearth in all of Dwarrowdelf. Durin's line, their immediate kin, and some of the most respected Dwarves in all of Moria made their homes here. Large mansions are carved from the stone of the mountain along the hall's outer edges, while several smaller houses stand crafted in the same manner as the mansions of the Seventeenth Hall. Almost twice the size of the Twenty-first Hall, this place was expressly built to serve as the living quarters for the lord of Moria.

Balin and his followers made a cursory exploration of the place but did not reclaim it for reasons given above. As sunlight streams into the hall through several shafts, they did not suspect that a band of fearsome Uruks—see 'The Uruks of the Twentieth Hall' on page 36—had taken it as their territory. Normally, Orcs would avoid such a bright place.

7–4 GUARD TOWER: This three-story structure was used primarily for storage of weapons, armour, and other supplies. From the outside, it is a plain, stone edifice melded into the wall. When the Dwarves originally opened up this cavern, they simply carved around blocks of stone they then shaped into structures such as this one.

The tower consists of three inner chambers, each taking up an entire floor. The first level was a guard chamber appointed with a long, flat, stone table and two niches bored into the wall for holding tunics. All of these furnishings have been stripped of anything of value.

The second story was used as a house of leechcraft for Dwarves injured in the dangerous businesses of mining, smithing, and the like. Four stone cabinets and two rows of beds fill the area. The bed's straw mattresses were long ago torn open, their inner material thrown about the room.

The third floor was used to store supplies for the house of healing below. A few old barrels of water, bundles of rotting bandages, and other materials are stacked in a corner. From the third floor, a stone ladder carved into the wall provides access to the roof.

7–5 THE WORMING SQUARE: This open space situated between several stone mansions was the central meeting and public space for the Twentieth Hall. Carts bearing supplies would stop here to distribute food, water, and other items to the hearths of the hall, while during holidays and other occasions for celebration the Dwarves would gather here to drink and make merry under the light of hundreds of lanterns hung from the hall's ceiling.

A large limestone statue occupies the centre of the square. It is carved in the likeness of a long, sinuous dragon draped around a mountain peak, and it gave this area its name. The carving was originally intended as a warning to the prosperous Dwarves who lived here of the dangers that could bring ruin to Moria, such as indolence, disrespect for elders, and arrogance.

A Stonecraft test (TN 15) reveals the statue seems to have a slightly discoloured block set at its base. The entire thing is in fact hollow, and the block can be pushed in far enough for a Man-sized character to squeeze into the statue. Peepholes carved into it allow a sentry to keep watch in any direction. What purpose this nest originally served, none can say, but currently the Uruks keep a sentry in here at all times to watch for intruders.

7–6 INNER BUILDINGS: After the Dwarves completed this hall, they later added to the living space by erecting these smaller manses in the central court. Each of these buildings was used as living quarters by a prominent Dwarf-family. The places are two stories tall, each one a variation on the generic theme shown on the 'Typical Dwarf Mansion' map.

7–7 GUESTS' HALL: This large stone edifice was used to house visiting dignitaries and other important guests of Moria. It has an inner courtyard which is open to the air. A large pool of water—black and grimy with dirt—once surrounded by soft, loamy soil made this a favoured place for the Dwarves' guests to relax. Ringing this centre court are private suites, each with a small sitting room and adjoining bedroom.

The Uruks use this place as a base of operations. They have a number of siege ladders which they use to scale the courtyard walls to the roof of the building and fire arrows down upon their enemies.

7–8 THE GRAND PALACE: An opulent, luxurious mansion—by Moria's sometimes cramped standards of space—this L-shaped manse served as the personal quarters for Durin VI and his immediate family. Though the interior of this place has long since been wrecked by the Orcs, some vestiges of its former glory remain. Silk curtains, slashed and singed by the Orcs, still hang from the walls, while faded, waterlogged carpets cover the floor. Here and there chunks have been torn from the walls, signs of the violent removal of gold, gems, and other valuables once embedded in decorative patterns. The following key summarises the areas within the mansion's first floor.

A, B. ENTRY ROOM: This entrance was used by Durin, his family, and others who lived within the mansion. An old coat rack still stands to the east, while the door to the west leads to a small guardroom with a fireplace and several old, wooden stools.

C. LIVING QUARTERS: These small rooms each hold a stone bedframe, a stone desk, and the remains of a wooden chair.

D. LIBRARY: The personal collection of Durin's line, these books contain lore of his family's history and deeds, along with journals the kings kept regarding Moria's history. In a chronicle set in the time of Balin's colony, Balin might decide to mount an expedition to recover these tomes, drawing the attention of the Uruks to the south.

E. PARLOUR: This room features a large, stone fireplace along the north wall, while a mouldering, badly slashed bearskin rug is set in the middle of the floor. At one time, this cosy room was used to hold private, informal audiences with visiting ambassadors and other persons of note.

F. STORAGE: A few barrels of water and ale still remain clustered in the south-east corner of this chamber, though their contents have long since spoiled. The Uruks use this chamber as an emergency supply closet. Hidden amongst the barrels are two fresh kegs of Orkish ale and two large bundles of dried meat.

G. DINING ROOM: This large chamber at the junction of the mansion's two legs served as a dining hall. Durin VI entertained visiting dignitaries and his personal guests here, dining with them before retiring to the parlour to the east to discuss matters of business. A long, stone table runs down the middle of this room, while a badly defaced symbol of Durin's line dominates the northern wall. The wreckage of a few smashed wooden chairs is piled in the north-eastern corner of the room.

H. KITCHEN: While this room's location suggests it was once a kitchen, the extensive damage wrought here by the Orcs has destroyed any evidence of its original use. The iron stove once set into the north wall was torn from the wall and carried off, leaving a gaping hole in the wall and a steady stream of dripping water running down the now ruined chimney.

I. PANTRY: The floor here is sticky, and the scent of spoiled beer stands thick in the air. For years, a few kegs of old, spoiled ale sat here. Recently, a scouting party of Uruks moved through here and smashed open one of the remaining kegs, leaving the ale spilled across the floor.

J. Master Bedchamber: This large chamber once served as the personal chambers of Durin VI and the other kings of Moria from his line. This large, wide room featured a large, canopied bed, dressers crafted by the finest Elven woodworkers, and other opulent furnishings. Today, only the bed remains, a fractured, hacked wreck that hints at the mansion's previous glories. This location is on the mansion's second floor, and does not appear on the map. It lies above the Dining Room and lesser Living Quarters described above, and is accessed by the stair off the hallway.

The Uruks of the Twentieth Hall

The foul members of this band of ambitious Uruks, who occupy the Twentieth Hall during the time of Balin's colony, serve their base desires and greed first, their master Sauron second. Owing to the Dark Lord's efforts to keep his true identity and power concealed, these Uruks wear no outward sign of their allegiance. Only their leader, Grishlug, knows the true power that directs them.

In total, Grishlug's followers number 30 Uruks. He rules with an iron fist and has instilled a sense of discipline in the Uruks that enables them to operate as an organised fighting force. A single Uruk acts as a sentry, keeping watch on the Twentieth Hall's entrance from within the Worming Statue. The Uruks hate this work, as the statue is cramped and the duty is boring.

Grishlug usually dispatches small groups to patrol the passages west of the Twentieth Hall. These patrols lurk near or on the Grand Stair, hoping to come across any of Balin's Dwarves who wander through the area. Their standing orders are to follow any Dwarves they see, watch their activities, and attack from ambush should they recover a treasure that seems valuable.

To help draw attention away from the Seventh Deep, Grishlug has ordered his followers never to attack a Dwarf above the Fifth Deep—for now. While Grishlug's followers pose a direct threat to Balin's colony, they do provide an indirect benefit. To cut down on the Dwarves' suspicion and to prevent his rivals from seizing treasure that should one day be his, Grishlug has directed the Uruks to ambush and kill any Orcs or other creatures that wander up from the Mines. In this manner, he hopes to lull Balin into a sense of security that will make the final strike that much more surprising.

If the sentry arrives with word of an attack, the Uruks fortify the Guests' Hall and prepare for an assault. They are ferocious in battle, but once half of them have been cut down, the rest break and flee. Until then, they rely on archers standing atop the hall to rain fire down on attackers while the main body of Uruks occupies and holds the entrance gate.

If the battle turns against the Uruks, they drop their ladders down the hall's outer wall, scramble down them, and flee to the Grand Stair. If Grishlug's camp is broken, he descends to the Mines, recruits more followers—including a Cave-troll—and sets up camp in the Fifth Deep, where he once again begins to harry the Dwarves. Should Grishlug fall in battle, the Uruks lose all discipline and fight solely to preserve their own lives.

K. Minor Bedchambers: These rooms served as living chambers for the king's immediate kin—in particular his sons and daughters who had not yet married or taken positions of responsibility elsewhere in Moria. Each room has a few splintered remains of furniture left within it, but otherwise they have been stripped bare of anything of value. These chambers—of which there are three—do not appear on the map because they are on the second floor. They are south of the Master Bedchamber, above the Entry Room and Library, and are accessed by the same stair.

7–9. Minor Workshops: These chambers served as workshops exclusively for the use of servants and artisans hired by the royal families of the Twentieth Hall. These chambers feature anvils, forges, stone workbenches, and other tools commonly found in work areas. Of course, all have long since been pillaged and wrecked by wandering bands of Orcs.

7–10. The Tilths of the Seventh Deep: Owing to the Seventh Deep's location above and to the north of the rest of Dwarrowdelf, the Dwarves carved many light shafts heading from these halls to the mountain's exterior. While these areas are far from drenched in sunlight, they still receive more light per day than any other portion of Moria, enabling the Dwarves to plant gardens, or 'tilths.' A dozen light shafts, each five feet along each side, run from the gardens to the mountainside. The light provided by these shafts pales compared to sunshine outside of Moria's walls, yet by the Dwarves' reckoning it was strong and bright.

This chamber is in essence a gigantic experiment commissioned to test the feasibility of growing food within Moria's bounds. Worried that a siege could slowly starve the people of Moria, the Dwarves sought to discover if any edible mushrooms, plants, or other foodstuffs could be grown in chambers carved with many light shafts. The effort resulted in a mixed success. Some plants and fungi grew here, but none could be cultivated in numbers great enough to support many Dwarves. Thus, the project was abandoned. The tilth remained as a curiosity, an area for relaxation and the occasional party.

Currently, this place is wildly overgrown. Mushrooms taller than a Man tower above the floor, while a thick, musty odour fills the chamber. A tangle of vines covers the walls and ceiling, leaving only space for shafts of dim sunlight to penetrate this chamber. Entering this place is akin to walking into another world, as from many vantage points no sign of Moria's rocky walls can be seen.

Vines obscure the chamber adjoining the western wall of this area. Within it is the work area of the old warden of the tilths. This chamber is completely intact, as the Orcs never hacked through the vines to discover it. Here are several ledgers that detail minutiae concerning the tilths, but a few of them contain sketch maps of several proposed new tilths in the Sixth Deep. A few hasty notes mention that in the final days of Moria these rooms were converted into treasure vaults and sealed off.

THE TWENTY-FIRST HALL

The Twenty-first Hall is in relatively good repair, especially compared to the crumbling ruins of the Mines and Western Deeps. Yet, nowhere else in Moria is the faded glory of the Dwarves more tragically apparent. Once-beautiful tapestries hang in ripped, burned, and stained tatters from walls, while inscriptions and statues that once graced this area are now nothing more than shattered, defaced ruins. Overall this place is structurally in good repair, but compared to the glories of its past it is little more than a tumbled ruin.

When Balin and his followers dwelt within Moria, they lived in the Twenty-first Hall, using the chambers and passages that once housed Moria's leaders as their base of operations for exploring, mining, and scouting. To help you set adventures during the Dwarves' brief but ultimately tragic attempt to reclaim Moria, the descriptions below of the areas used by Balin and his people contain information about the uses to which they were put in that time. Adventure ideas for characters participating in the re-colonisation effort are also provided in some places.

Evidence of Balin's colony remains in this area in the late Third Age: wrecked armour, Dwarf- and Orc-skeletons, and other evidence of struggle can be found by the careful observer. These are more difficult to see than might be imagined, however, as the Orcs tend to loot anything useful they can carry from the battlefield.

The following locations correspond to the 'Twenty-first Hall' map.

7–11. THE TWENTY-FIRST HALL OF THE NORTH END: At the height of Moria's power, this place bustled with the activity of hundreds of Dwarves. As this portion of Moria served as the seat of the King and his counsels, important proclamations, meetings, councils, and other gatherings were held in this area. During holidays and other festive occasions, the Dwarves hung a great number of lamps here and celebrated their prosperity with food, song, and drink. Great pillars dominate this room, running from the smooth, stone floor over 60 feet to the hall's vaulted ceiling.

When Balin came to Moria, he used the Twenty-first Hall as his primary settlement and base of operation. The Dwarves posted four guards at the eastern and western entrances to the hall, with each group given a loud bell to ring in case of attack.

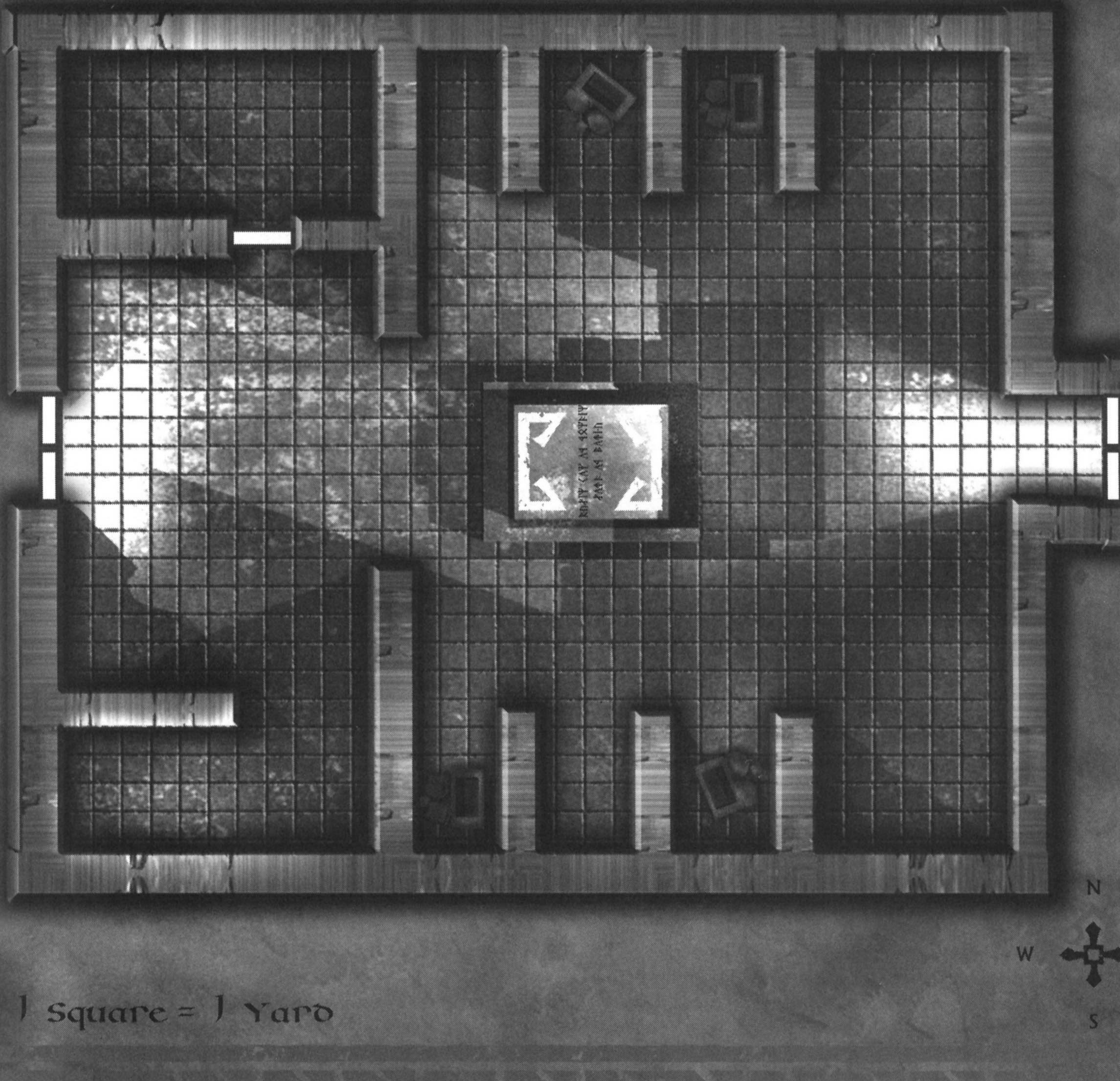
In Balin's colony chronicles , Balin may ask the characters to help keep watch over the Twenty-first Hall. This place is his first line of defence against attack, and the characters could be called on to rally other Dwarves to drive away a band of Orcs or a rampaging Troll. The hall's great size makes it an ideal location for a large-scale battle in the event that the heroes arouse the ire of a powerful Orc-chieftain who rallies his followers for an assault on the hall.

7–12. MAZARBUL, THE CHAMBER OF RECORDS: A single shaft allows a dull stream of sunlight to illuminate this room. Once, wooden desks and shelves dominated this area, but these were long ago carried off for firewood by invading Orcs. A long, low stone vault runs down the middle of the chamber. Alcoves set into the north and south wall hold stone chests smashed and opened with large, blunt instruments.

The administrative centre of Moria, Mazarbul once hosted the bulk of the mountain's records and record-keepers. Dwarf-scribes worked here, computing the value of goods bought and sold by the folk of Dwarrowdelf, determining tithes due from merchant houses and craftsmen, and keeping records of events within the city. The stone vault once held tax records and other important documents, though after Balin's death, it served a much grimmer purpose as his final resting place. Carved onto the slab are runes that read 'Balin Son of Fundin, Lord of Moria.' The vault has long since been emptied by the Orcs, who were all too eager to loot and disturb their hated enemy's body.

Recognising the symbolic nature of this chamber, Balin elected to establish his throne here to mark Moria's new beginning. During a Balin's colony chronicle, Balin spends most of his waking hours here, planning expeditions to distant portions of Moria and collecting reports, maps, and other information from returning scouting parties. The chests hold important artefacts recovered from various explorations. The room buzzes with activity as Balin's aides research ledgers and books recovered

MAZARBUL



1 Square = 1 Yard

by expeditions, ponder maps, and plan for the recovery of more areas within Moria.

7–13. Hall of Remembrance: This chamber was once lit by a multitude of lamps hung from silver chains affixed to the 20-foot-tall, vaulted ceiling. The greatest of the Dwarves' craftsmen used hammers and chisels to carve breathtaking scenes from Moria's history on the walls, though the marauding Orcs have done their best to deface each and every one.

This entire chamber served as a monument to Moria's past, with empty spaces along the western wall reserved for carvings that would, the Dwarves hoped, one day depict the glories of Moria's future. By design, visitors who sought an audience with Durin first walked through this chamber before making their way to Moria's throne room.

The destruction of the Hall of Remembrance struck dearly at the Dwarves who attempted to re-colonise Moria. Several stoneworkers amongst them set to repairing what damage they could mend. Wooden scaffolds stand along a portion of the northern wall, and while the re-colonisers were present, at any given time several Dwarves chipped away at the stone in a bid to restore its former glory.

Dwarves occupying this area during a Balin's colony chronicle may uncover evidence in one of the carvings of a great vein of *mithril* somewhere in the Mines below. Using hints from the picture, the characters might plan an expedition there and travel with a large band of Dwarf-miners and surveyors. Of course, if this mural were one of the last ones added to the hall it might point the characters and their companions directly to the Balrog's resting place.

7–14. Audience Chamber: Benches running from east to west and arranged in neat rows dominate the southern leg of this area, all facing south towards a raised platform where once stood the throne of Moria. The northern portion is a single, open space. In happier times, the Dwarves gathered here to take counsel amongst themselves and debate Moria's future. Durin held court in the southern portion, receiving visitors, hearing testimony and complaints from his people, and conferring with his advisors in the chambers to the west.

At one time, golden lamps hung from silver chains on the ceiling, filling this chamber with a warm, bright glow. Durin's throne was a large, tall seat crafted from *mithril* and inlaid with diamonds and other gems. The steps leading from the floor to the throne's platform were fashioned from gold, while runes and intricate patterns in gold and *mithril* set into the walls, ceiling, and floor reflected the room's ample light.

The chambers west of here served as sitting rooms and waiting areas for Durin and his advisors. Important meetings between the Dwarves and representatives of nearby realms took place in these private chambers. The Orcs stripped the rugs, furnishings, and wondrous items that decorated this place, leaving behind only dust and wreckage.

The Dwarves of Balin's colony considered the restoration of the throne room an important part of their plans to rebuild Moria, even if only for symbolic reasons. During that time they took care to sweep this room clean and do what repairs they could. Though the Dwarves couldn't afford to divert their precious resources to crafting a new throne, Balin almost immediately made plans for the day when work could finally begin. Chalk marks on the floor depict where the new throne was to be erected.

While he lived, Balin used the chambers to the west as his personal apartments. He and his guards resided there.

Characters who are part of Balin's company could be asked to help stand guard over this area, particularly as the Dwarves' activity draws the attention of Sauron and his minions. A small group of Orcs trained as assassins might crawl through one of this area's light shafts and attempt to sneak into Balin's apartments to murder him. Even if the heroes foil the attempt, they have only thwarted the first of many attacks on the colony.

7–15. The Great Library: Tying into the theme of Moria's history set by the Hall of Remembrance to the west, this chamber holds the collected records of Moria's centuries of existence. While recent information and ledgers were kept in Mazarbul, older records were placed on shelves here by year. Over the many years of Moria's existence, this chamber steadily grew larger and larger. Stone shelves run from ceiling to floor, leaving this place a veritable maze for anyone who would explore it. Even the Orcs in their lust to despoil their enemy's possessions soon grew tired of hacking and burning the records here.

In some areas, entire shelves still hold the collected knowledge of the years. A dedicated researcher could uncover maps, detailed descriptions of Moria's deeps, and other vital information. Of course, useful volumes are tucked between endless trade ledgers, lists of imports and exports, tax records, and other mundane items. Further, all of the records here are written in Khuzdul, making them useless to any character who cannot read that tongue.

The Dwarves who accompanied Balin quickly descended upon the library, hoping to uncover as much lost information as possible. Over the years since the Dwarves were forced from Moria, much lore concerning its history and layout had been lost to the mists of time. The Dwarves began the long, slow process of collecting, organising, and extracting useful information from the volumes.

With the same fervour with which they patrolled Moria's corridors and re-opened its Mines, the Dwarves set to cataloguing and recovering as many of the old records as possible. A team of a dozen scribes slowly worked through the books, copying useful information from them and carefully placing them back into chronological order.

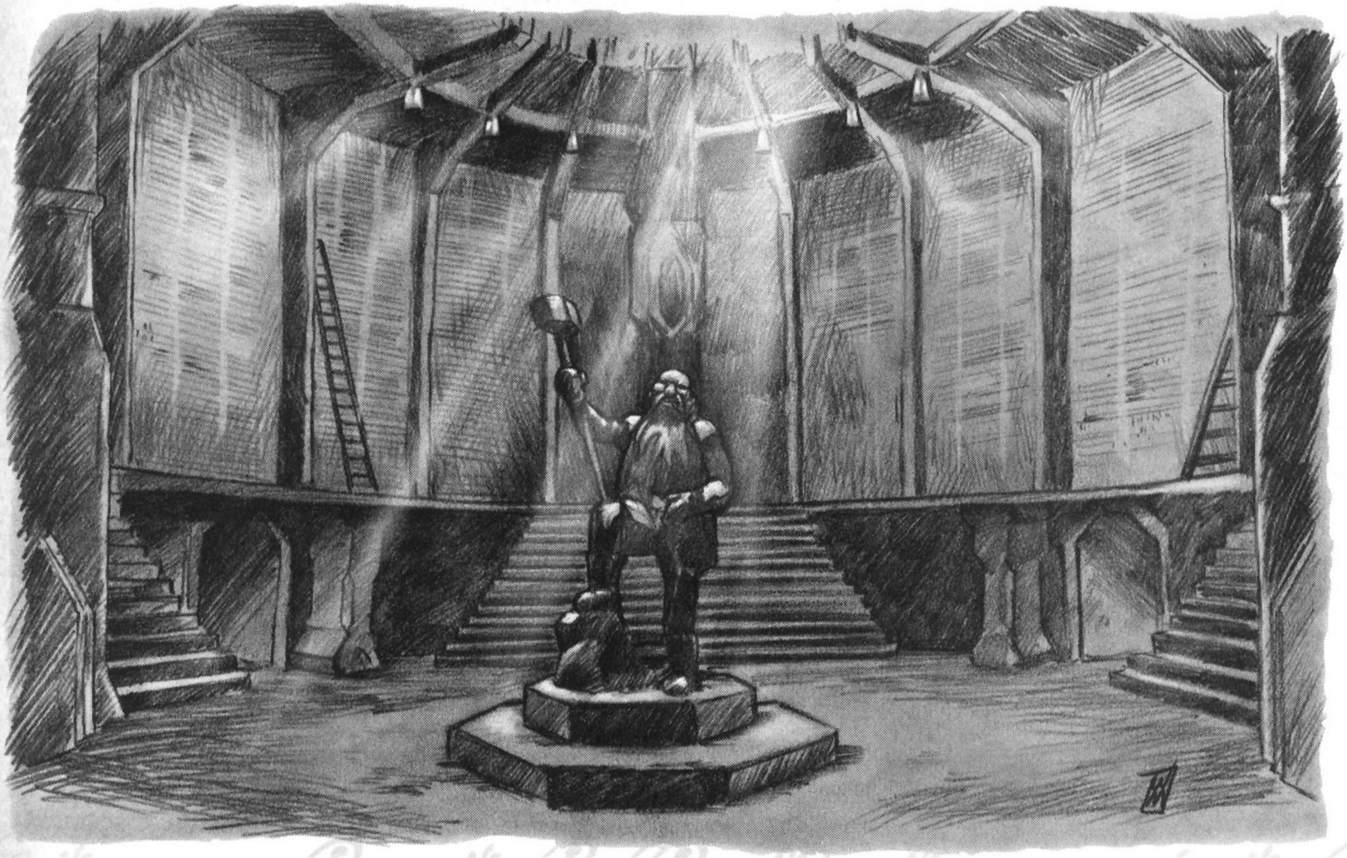
Many missions undertaken by PC heroes of Balin's colony could have their origination here. As the Dwarves catalogue the books, they might uncover evidence of lost treasure vaults, hidden passages, and other secrets of Moria. One book might describe a long-lost Dwarf-settlement not far outside Moria's gates. The heroes might be set to journey through the mountains north of Moria to investigate the now Orc-infested ruins, built as an emergency shelter for Dwarves outside Moria. The well-preserved ruins could hold keys, books, or other relics useful to uncovering more of Moria's secrets.

7–16. NORTH END ARMOURY: Due to the Twenty-first Hall's important position within Moria and its strategic location at the eastern end of Durin's Way, a large number of soldiers were quartered here at all times. Assignment to the North End Armoury was the highest honour a Dwarf-warrior could earn. Even during times of peace, Durin's personal bodyguards lived here and provided a ceremonial escort for the Dwarf-king. The main, central chamber of this area served as a practice ground and mustering area. Target dummies were arranged around the room's edges, while sparring practice took place here on a daily basis.

The chamber directly north of the main practice ground served as an office of the watch. The acting commander of this post manned this room with a few assistants. The chambers to the west held weapons, armour, and other supplies, though the Orcs eagerly looted all of this material. The southern end served as the personal living quarters for the armoury's commander and his chief lieutenant, while the halls to the east and north-east functioned as general barracks.

Balin and his people converted this area to their main living area, as well as a meeting area and marshalling point for exploration teams and miners. The chambers to the west held the colony's supplies, while those to the south and east served as sleeping chambers.

7–17. MAKERS' MOOT: While Durin and his line reigned as kings of Moria, they did not hold absolute power over all areas of life. The most skilled and important of the Dwarf-craftsmen headed a guild that set prices; distributed *mithril*, gold, silver, and other ores throughout Moria's workshops; and negotiated pay rates with the Dwarf-merchants. The merchants in turn bargained with Elves and Men who came to Moria to trade their goods for the Dwarves' exquisite works. By the same token, the guild handled the distribution of funds to the miners, guards, and others who took part in Moria's production of stone and metal goods.



The Dwarves of Balin's Colony

Over one hundred Dwarves lived within Moria from TA 2989 to 2994. Led by Balin, for a short time they prospered. Their search parties slowly uncovered Moria's lost precincts, while workers mined the mountain for gold, silver, and other ores. Within five years, though, Balin had fallen and the colony was cut off from the outside world, surrounded, and destroyed.

Balin

Race: Dwarf (Durin's folk)

Racial Abilities: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy

Attributes: Bearing 11 (+4), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 10 (+2)*, Vitality 10 (+2)*, Wits 9 (+1)

Reactions: Stamina +2*, Swiftness +1, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

Defence: 11

Order: Warrior

Order Abilities: Battle-Hardened, Favoured Weapon (Battle Axe)

Advancements: 8

Skills: Appraise +6, Armed Combat: Axes (Battle Axe) +8, Debate (Parley) +8, Insight +5, Inspire +8, Intimidate (Majesty) +5, Language: Khuzdul +8, Language: Westron +5, Lore: History (Durin's folk) +7, Lore: Realm (Erebor) +6, Lore: Realm (Moria) +5, Observe (Spot) +5, Run +4, Search +6, Smithcraft (Armouring) +8, Stonecraft (Delving) +8

Edges: Ally (King Dáin), Command, Doughty, Faithful 3 (Durin's line), Hardy, Hoard 2, Rank 2 (Lord of Moria)

Flaws: Enemy (Orcs), Proud

Health: 12

Courage: 10

Renown: 17

Gear: Durin's Axe, *mithril* mail and helm

The leader of the Dwarf-colony in Moria, Balin is renowned for his kindliness, wisdom, and loyalty. He stood by both Thráin and Thorin on their quests to restore the Dwarves' fortunes, and he journeyed into Moria not simply to recover its riches for his personal glory but to restore the fortunes of the House of Durin as a whole.

Balin leads by example. He gladly takes his place at the front lines in battle, hefts a mattock or pick to delve in the mines, and walks a guard shift alongside his followers. His belief in the successful restoration of Moria is unshakeable, but he refuses to take any more risks than necessary to see that dream realised.

Unlike many Dwarves, Balin has many friends amongst Men, Hobbits, and even the Elves. For this reason, he gladly accepts offers of aid from characters of all backgrounds, so long as he believes their hearts are true and their courage unquestionable.

Balin is of average height for a Dwarf. His beard is long and streaked with grey. Though he has seen many years, he is as hale and hearty as a young Dwarf. He prefers to wear gold and jewels that are muted and subtle, valued more for their expert craftsmanship than the gold and jewels from which they are crafted.

The mighty weapon Balin carries, Durin's Axe, is a legendary battle axe that imparts a +6 test bonus to Inspire or Intimidate tests when the target of the test recognises the weapon. The surface of the axe is decorated with detail so fine that some of it cannot be seen by the un-aided eye. As the axe swings, these runes and designs appear to dance over the surface of the weapon.

These statistics represent Balin around TA 2990.

Óin

Race: Dwarf (Durin's folk)

Racial Abilities: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy

Attributes: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 6 (+0), Perception 7 (+0), Strength 13 (+3)*, Vitality 10 (+2)*, Wits 9 (+1)

Reactions: Stamina +5*, Swiftness +0, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

Defence: 10

Order: Warrior

Order Abilities: Battle-Hardened, Favoured Weapon (Battle Axe)

Advancements: 7

Skills: Armed Combat: Axes (Battle Axe) +8, Healing +5, Inspire +6, Language: Khuzdul +8, Language: Westron +8, Lore: History (Durin's folk) +7, Lore: Realm (Erebor) +4, Lore: Realm (Moria) +2, Observe +2, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Battle Axe) +6, Stonecraft +2,

The Dwarves of Balin's Colony (continued)

Siegecraft +6, Survival (Mountains) +5

Edges: Bold, Night-eyed, Travel-sense

Flaws: Fealty (House of Durin)

Health: 13

Courage: 3

Renown: 6

Gear: Battle axe, Dwarf-chainmail and helm

Óin is Balin's field commander and a respected warrior, wanderer, and leader. Renowned for his skill in never losing his way through Moria's halls, he frequently leads expeditions to its farthest reaches in search of hidden treasures and weapon caches. Óin's drive to restore Moria is second only to Balin's, and he ranges far and wide with parties to uncover the realm's secrets.

In many ways, Óin fits the stereotypical Dwarf's personality. He is quiet and taciturn around strangers, preferring the company of his own folk to Men or Elves. If on the trail of a treasure cache, he prefers to remain hidden and allow strangers to pass on without knowing of his presence. Óin draws a rigid line between business and information to be shared amongst Dwarves and that which can be spoken of before outsiders. Most of his disagreements with Balin spring from this fundamental rift in their natures. Yet, Óin does not let his distrust of other peoples cloud his judgement. If given reason to trust others, he accepts them. A Man, Elf, or Hobbit who selflessly aids the Dwarves slowly earns his respect.

Óin is tall and lean for a Dwarf, owing to his many years spent wandering. His beard is thick and long, normally tucked into the plain leather belt he wears. His bright blue eyes twinkle from beneath his hood, and though outsiders may find him grim and quiet he is known for his wit amongst his people.

These statistics represent Óin around TA 2990.

Typical Dwarf

Sample Names: Frár, Lóni, Náli, Ori

Race: Dwarf (Durin's folk)

Racial Abilities: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy

Attributes: Bearing 6 (+0), Nimbleness 6 (+0), Perception 7 (+0), Strength 8 (+1)*, Vitality 9 (+1)*, Wits 7 (+0)

Reactions: Stamina +1*, Swiftness +0, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

Defence: 10

Order: Warrior

Order Abilities: Favoured Weapon (Battle Axe)

Advancements: 0

Skills: Armed Combat: Axes (Battle Axe) +6, Healing +3, Language: Khuzdul +8, Language: Westron +8, Lore: History (Durin's folk) +7, Lore: Realm (Erebor) +4, Lore: Realm (Moria) +2, Observe +4, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Battle Axe) +3, Stonecraft +5, Survival (Mountains) +2

Edges: Craftmaster, Faithful (Balin), Hardy

Flaws: Fealty (House of Durin), Oath (Restore Moria)

Health: 10

Courage: 2

Renown: 0

Gear: Battle axe, Dwarf-chainmail and helm

The Makers' Moot was the central meeting place for the elected guild representatives. Here, they would meet and discuss the issues they wished to raise and debate in their monthly council with Durin's heirs. These chambers were richly appointed even by the Dwarves' standards. The outer doors were polished marble set with intricate runes etched in *ithildin*.

The main circle featured a single light shaft. Golden lanterns set with crystals and mirrors and enchanted with Dwarf-magic amplified the natural light that spilled through the shaft, giving the chamber a soft, warm glow. By night, the lamps reflected the moon's glow across the room, spreading a gentle radiance upon the *ithildin* runes inscribed in the walls of this chamber. These Khuzdul writings describe the most secret elements of the Dwarves' knowledge of mining, metalworking, and craftsmanship. One of the greatest honours that could be bestowed on one of Durin's folk was to be invited to add a passage to the Maker's Moot. Many young Dwarves gathered here at night to read and study the histories by moonlight.

The chambers north of the central room were used for meetings and debates. The central room has a long, stone table, while the smaller rooms off this area were used for informal conferences and discussions. Negotiations over prices, trade pacts, and other sensitive business typically took place here.

The rooms east of the central chamber were given over to the instruction of promising young

Dwarves. Each is set with a small forge and workbench the elder craftsmen used to impart their wisdom to the next generation.

During the time of Balin's colony, the most important project underway here was the recovery of the writings on the wall. Though the *ithildin* had been stripped away, the runes' basic shapes could still be seen in many places, and Balin's Dwarf-scribes spent long hours transcribing and studying them.

7–18. The Chamber of Judgement: During Moria's prosperous years, this great hall served as a court of law to resolve disputes amongst the Dwarves. The outer hall and the chambers connected to it to the north were used to deal with petty matters, primarily personal disputes or matters relating to contracts and other agreements. The large chamber to the south hosted major cases and served as an audience chamber for those who had a case to present to the magistrates. A stone platform set with a great throne dominates the south end of that chamber. The chambers to the west held legal texts and were used as conference chambers for the magistrates as they made their decisions, while the chamber to the south served as a sitting room for the judges between cases.

Two light shafts carved into the ceiling provide illumination for the southern chamber. Long rows of stone benches face the south, while a raised stone platform holds five stone thrones on which the judges once sat and heard cases. At one time, the Dwarves kept golden, silver, and *mithril* symbols of office here, but those items have all been claimed by Orc marauders or carried away by the fleeing Dwarves.

Balin and his followers did not make it a priority to reclaim and repair this room. They cleared away most of the debris and made an effort to clean the area, but had more pressing matters to attend to than repairing this hall.

THE WESTERN DEEP

Carved later in Moria's history, these passages and chambers are generally smaller and more cramped than the expansive mansions of Dwarrowdelf. After the rise of the Balrog, this area sustained tremendous damage, leaving it riddled with pits, chasms, and collapsed tunnels. A single tunnel nearly 20 miles long—known as the Great Passage, or Durin's Way—provides the only direct connection between the Western Deeps and the rest of Moria, though various roundabout routes connect the Mines beneath this region with those to the east.

HOLLIN GATE REGION

Situated in the region immediately around the West-door, the chambers and galleries within this portion of Moria once saw the bulk of the kingdom's traffic with the outside world. In the days of old, the Elves of Hollin, Men of Tharbad, and others journeyed far bearing treasures great and small to trade for the Dwarves' goods. Within these halls, Dwarf, Man, and Elf gathered in friendship to barter, trade, and forge bonds now long since withered away.

WD–1. Chamber of Pools: Illuminated by three light shafts evenly spaced in its vaulted ceiling, this vaguely S-shaped chamber hosts three separate pools of perfectly clear water. Each pool is carved directly below one of the shafts, and reflections off them bathe this entire chamber in a shimmering, refracted light. At one time, polished mirrors, crystals, and inlaid patterns of *mithril* were set along the walls here, further reflecting the light streaming from above and giving the chamber a soft, ghostly radiance. When Moria was inhabited, celebrations and parties were commonly held here to mark weddings, births, treaties, and other beginnings. These events were typically scheduled to occur when the moon loomed large within one of the pools.

The years have not been kind to this chamber. The pools have long since gone dry, whilst Orcs have looted the mirrors, crystals, and *mithril* that were once found here. According to legend, the moon or sun's reflection in all three pools heralded the opening of a secret doorway or trapdoor somewhere within this chamber that was said to lead to a long-since-lost series of passages. This tunnel could lead to a great treasure hoard, a secret way to Durin's Tower, a series of hidden apartments housing a host of *mithril* objects, or perhaps a chamber of records holding details of other hidden chambers within Moria.

WD–2. CHAMBERS OF THE HOLLIN WARDER: When Moria bustled with trade, this series of rooms was the administrative and defensive centre of the Western Deep. The main chamber is set with four pillars, each of which is carved to resemble a figure standing at attention. Starting from the north-western pillar and progressing clockwise, they depict a Dwarf in mail bearing an axe and standing at attention, a Dwarf in a smith's apron holding a hammer, a tall Elf arrayed in elegant robes, and a sturdy Man dressed in the rich clothes of a merchant. In the years since Moria's fall, these pillars have long since been defaced and ruined. The two chambers south of this area were once administrative offices. Merchants coming to and from the Hollin Gate registered their goods here and logged both their place of origin and destination.

WD–3. VAULT OF THE HEAVENS: This tall, domed room is bathed in utter darkness. Sources of light brought here, from magical flame to simple torch, dwindle to a faint, dull radiance. If any such light sources are doused and the doors to the room closed, after a few moments a series of small, twinkling lights appear across the ceiling. A careful observer would note that the lights resemble the arrangement of the stars in the night sky. Powerful magic duplicates the stars' current arrangement in Middle-earth's sky, allowing the Dwarves to keep track of the roll of days and the turning of seasons in the outside world. During particularly fierce winters, snowdrifts could block both the West-door and the Dimrill Gates, forcing the Dwarves to rely on this chamber to prepare for the coming spring.

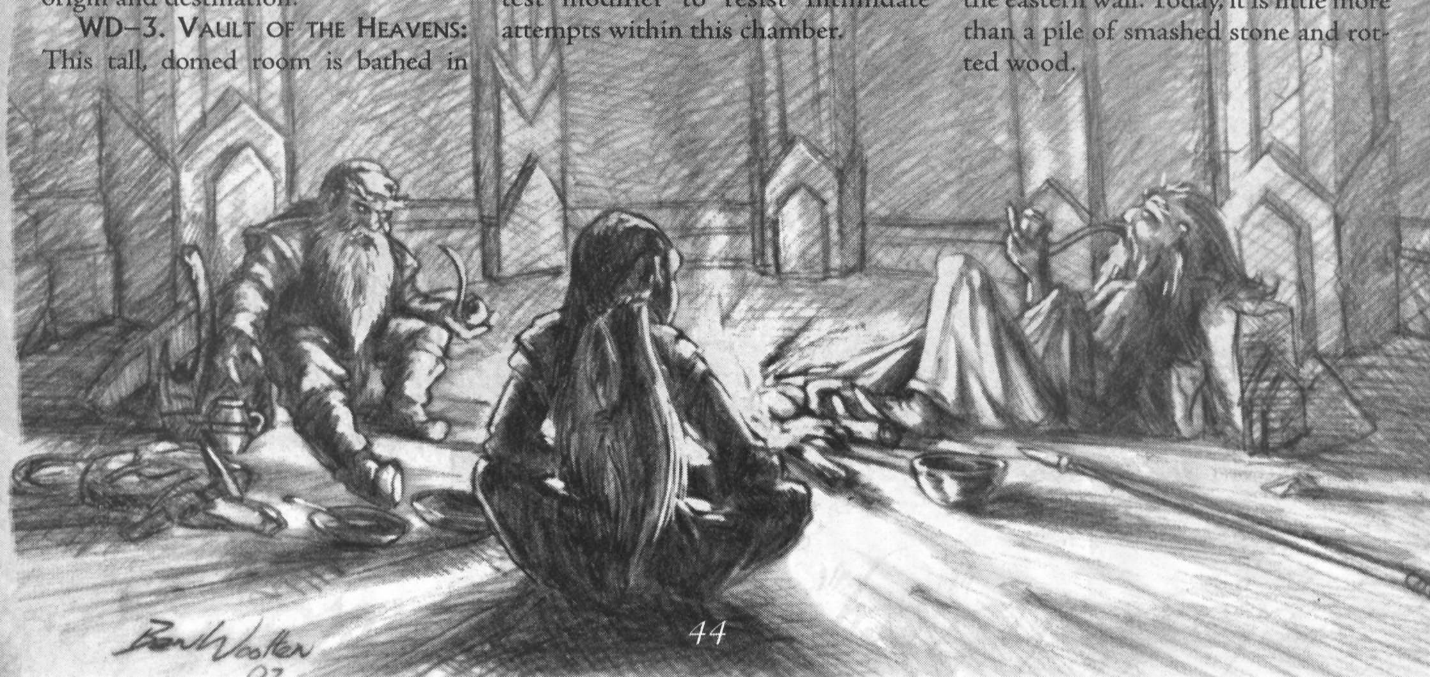
The Orcs have since attempted to solve the riddle of the dome's magic, as evidenced by the deep scars carved into it with picks, hammers, and other crude tools. Despite these depredations, this room retains its power. When the doors leading into it are closed, it grows as warm as a spring day here, and air currents from unseen channels fill the room with a gentle, fragrant breeze. A character suffering from a fear effect automatically recovers here, while anyone who rests here recovers Weariness levels at twice the normal rate. Furthermore, servants of the Shadow suffer a –2 test modifier to resist Intimidate attempts within this chamber.

Needless to say, the Orcs, Trolls, and other creatures lurking within Moria's shadows despise this room and avoid it. While the characters spend time here, they need not make Peril tests.

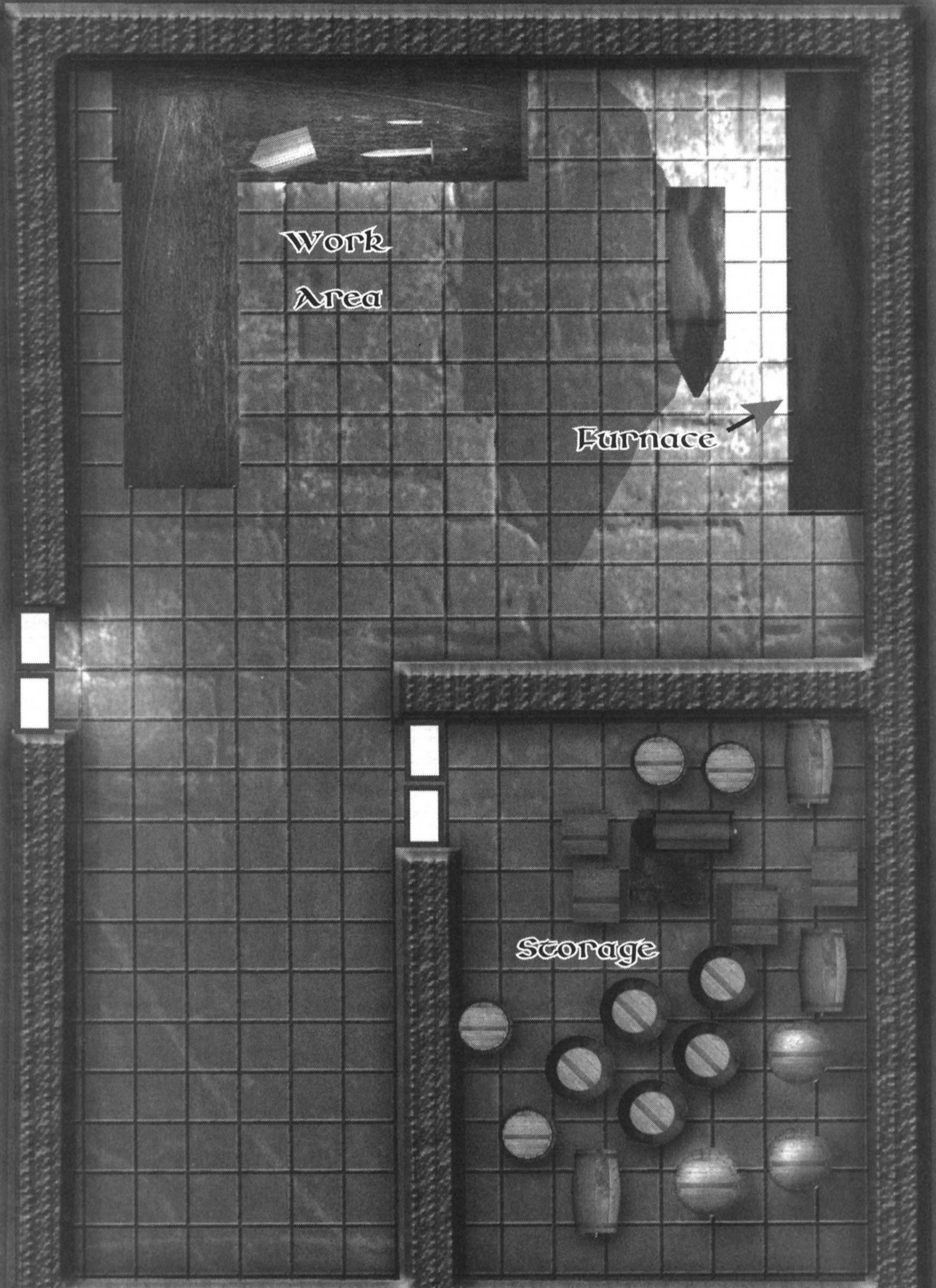
WD–4. SINGING CHAMBER: This vaulted, perfectly formed, spherical room was once used by Dwarf-musicians to fill the entire West-door area with the ringing sound of their performances. This chamber and the area around it are expertly crafted with chisel, hammer, and magic to augment any sounds made within the area. Noise originates here and echoes throughout the area, extending up to 300 yards down passages, around corners, and through doorways.

When the first merchants of the spring season arrived in Moria, they were typically greeted with beautiful concerts staged in this area that echoed throughout the halls. Today, this chamber poses a terrible danger to explorers and others who enter it. Conversations—even whispers—echo from this place and across the halls. Make a Peril test at a –4 test result modifier if a character makes any noise whatsoever within this chamber.

This chamber features a low, stone stage carved at its southern end. A smashed cabinet that once contained sheet music, instruments, and other musical paraphernalia stands against the eastern wall. Today, it is little more than a pile of smashed stone and rotted wood.



TYPICAL WORKSHOP


Work
Area
Furnace
Storage

1 Square = 1 Yard

WD–5. WESTERN DEEP WORKSHOPS: Once, this area resounded with the ringing of hammers and the bustle of Dwarves at work. These chambers served as smithies, workrooms, and other spaces in which artisans could engage in their trade. Each room has a long shaft leading to the surface, along with a chimney designed to draw smoke from the forges built here.

As Moria continued to grow, the Dwarves expanded their workshops to this area. Over time, the artisans who specialised in crafting items particularly prized by Elves and Men migrated here to deal directly with their customers. At one time, these workshops resembled palaces more than places of toil, as the great wealth accumulated by this area's craftsmen allowed them to appoint their work areas with the finest tools and elegant decorations of Elvish design. Sadly, these rooms were amongst the first ransacked when the Dwarves abandoned Moria. Still, some signs of their opulence remain.

Many of the anvils and forges used by the Dwarves remain despite the Orcs' efforts. Most have been toppled over and defaced, but with some work they could be restored. Anyone using one of the forges here to produce a finished work of metal gains a +2 bonus to Craft tests made within these workrooms. Furthermore, a craftsman who attempts to enchant an item using these workrooms gains a +2 bonus to his Stamina tests to resist Weariness levels. Also, once during the process of creating an enchanted item, the craftsman may re-roll a single failed Stamina test.

WD–6. TRADE WARD: At the height of Moria's prosperity, more coins changed hands in these pillared, vaulted halls than in almost any city of Man, Elf, or Dwarf across Middle-earth. A king's ransom in *mithril*, paid for with a king's treasury of gold, gems, and goods, flowed through these halls during each of the warm-weather months. As befits such a rich marketplace, the floors of these chambers, from end to end, were paved in finely polished gold. The walls were inlaid with designs etched in silver, while patterns set in diamonds, emeralds, and other gems were set upon the ceiling. Great shafts set into the ceiling allowed sunlight to stream into this place, enough so that small rows of hanging gardens were strung between each pillar in both vaults.

In the years when Moria was a bustling economic centre, many traders came here to gaze upon its beauty, caring little for the prices their wares fetched in light of the wondrous experience of walking Moria's halls. The years have been far from kind to this part of Moria, as the Orcs thoroughly despoiled this room, both out of a desire to erase any traces of its once majestic beauty and from lust for the gold, gems, and silver that once decorated this place.

Currently, both halls of the trade ward lie in utter ruin. In their lust to recover the treasures found here, the Orcs dug deep pits, collapsed walls, and hewed the stone pillars with great axes and clubs. The golden floor has long since been gouged apart and carried away, while jagged holes mark where beautifully crafted frescoes and other designs once covered the walls. What was once a sunlit, airy market place is now a dirt- and rubble-choked ruin. Piles of earth and stone rise higher than a Man's head, forcing explorers to clamber up, over, and around treacherous rubble to traverse this area.

WD–7. WESTERN WATCHTOWERS: Carved above the surrounding chambers, these two watchtowers are set flush against Celebdil's outer, western face. Light streams into these chambers from two large, square windows carved into the western walls. When the Dwarves occupied Moria, they used these chambers to keep watch over the Hollin Road. Great bronze horns kept in both watchtowers were used to alert the doormen who stood sentinel over the West-door below.

WD–8. CRYSTAL PILLARS: When the Dwarves excavated this portion of Moria, they discovered four veins of crystal running through this chamber's rock. Rather than extract this find, the cunning Dwarf-craftsmen dug around each vein and left the crystal intact in its original form. Unfortunately, while the craftsmen succeeded in their task, the end result of their work was less than satisfying. Perhaps due to some malign influence from the sleeping Balrog or some other creature of the deeps, this chamber has always been a place of ill luck and misfortune. Any member of the Free Peoples suffers a –1 modifier to any tests he attempts in here, while servants of the Shadow receive a +1 bonus. The TN to resist Weariness levels in this chamber increases by a further +2, in addition to the standard modifier for walking within Moria's dark, foreboding halls.

Orcs and worse commonly visit this room while wandering through Moria in search of treasure or other diversions. The characters suffer a –2 penalty to Peril tests while they linger here. Furthermore, make a Peril test each time the characters approach this chamber, ignoring any natural hazards but placing any monsters generated within this room.

EASTERN AXEBOLD

The easternmost reach of the Western Deeps region, this area was the first portion carved by the Dwarves as they expanded Moria's reach west of Dwarrowdelf. Originally, the Eastern Axebold was an important access point to the Mines that were dug ever westwards from Dwarrowdelf, but as the halls eventually expanded to the West-door the area shifted to become a social and military centre. In times of war, the Dwarves near the West-gate expected to beat a fighting retreat to this area, allowing the women and children to flee east to Dwarrowdelf before mounting a determined defence in Durin's Way.

EA–1. Central Shaft: In happier times when Moria was a vibrant, living community, this wide, deep shaft helped supply all of the Western Deeps with potable water. Using a system of chains and counterweights, the Dwarves lowered a stone platform down from here to the lowest levels of the Mines. Once there, workers stowed barrels of water upon the platform and used the chains to hoist it and its cargo back up to the Western Deeps. Steel bars were used to lock the platform in place once it was raised to the top, whilst a notched wheel regulated its descent. Whilst this process required tremendous physical labour and time, the demand for fresh water—both for drinking and metalworking—kept the works in constant use. The chambers immediately surrounding this area were used to store full barrels that awaited delivery to distant sections of the Western Deeps, as well as empty barrels set aside for a return trip downward.

With the coming of the Balrog, this place has long since fallen into disuse. The Orcs are too simple and brutish to solve the riddle of the lift's operation. A character may inspect the mechanism and determine how to operate it with a Smithcraft, Stonecraft, or engineering-related Lore skill test against TN 15. This mechanism can provide swift access to the lowest mine levels, and such was the cunning craftsmanship of the Dwarves that the lift operates with little noise, even after centuries of neglect.

Characters who wish to operate the lift must make a TN 5 Strength test and may do nothing save hold the chain and regulate the elevator's descent. The return trip requires three TN 10 Strength tests, one for each third of the journey. Up to three characters may aid in each test. On a failed test, the elevator stops at its current position. On a complete failure, the lift begins making loud groaning and clanking noises which cause an immediate Peril check. On a disastrous failure, the elevator falls freely: heroes on board who fail to stop this descent—which requires a TN 20 Strength test—suffer 8d6 damage per each third of the shaft the elevator drops.

EA–2. Chamber of Pillars: Once an entryway leading to barracks and armouries, this hall was long ago sundered by a great rift within its floor. This gap measures 10 feet across at its narrowest and plunges downwards to the furthest depths of the Mines.

The chambers north of this hall once served as headquarters for the watch. Though most of the area has been long since plundered and left a ruin, a compartment secreted in the north-eastern corner of the largest office chamber hides a set of maps of this area and a ring of iron keys that open many locked doors found in the Western Deeps region. Most importantly, the map shows the location of the Upper Armouries, and one of the keys can be used to open the hidden door leading into them.

EA–3. Chamber of Statues: When Moria stood at the peak of its power, this chamber was hallowed ground for the Dwarves. The vaulted ceiling here extends 40 feet above the floor, and four statues herein, each almost 20 feet in height, stand a silent vigil over this chamber. The four statues once bore the likenesses of important Dwarves of Moria, including Durin himself, but they have long since been ruined and despoiled by the Orcs. Chunks of stone and other rubble litter the floor around them.

EA–4. Durin's Way: This long, smoothly carved passage runs nearly 20 miles from the Eastern Axebold to the Twenty-first Hall of the North End. It served as the primary thoroughfare for Dwarves—and other travellers with the Dwarves' leave—passing between the Western Deeps and Dwarrowdelf. It is interrupted at regular intervals by guard posts, some of which are concealed within the walls of the corridor. The concealed variety were created so the Dwarves could alternately hide from and ambush potential invaders, and many are still undiscovered by Orcs. In addition to the guard posts, Durin's Way is interrupted by a number of chambers where travellers could rest, eat, and sleep in the course of their travel.

EA–5. The Rift: While the Western Deeps are riddled with cracks, holes, and crevasses, few of these hazards are as wide and daunting as the rift found in this area's northeastern region. Up to 15 feet wide in some portions, the rift is a daunting obstacle for any who must cross it. Characters who tumble into it are forever lost, though a wisely spent Courage point allows a character to grab hold of a rock or other handhold.

EA–6. Silverforge: When this chamber was first constructed, the Dwarves noticed that smoke from their torches and lamps seemed to dissipate quickly in here, though whether by some trick of air currents or magic none could guess. Eager to take advantage of this trait, the Dwarves erected a forge within this chamber and used it to make quick repairs to their tools, mine carts, and other pieces of equipment used in the Mines below.

Over time, this place became known as the Silverforge. While it never produced wondrous items—as did the workshops of the Hollin Gate and Dwarrowdelf—the tools forged here helped provide a steady stream of gold, silver, and *mithril* to all of Moria. Today, the subtle magic of this place lingers on. Through luck or happenstance, the Orcs have yet to despoil this chamber. Characters who attempt to use the Smithcraft skill here may complete their work in half the normal time. The fresh air here invigorates and heartens a craftsman as he toils over the forge, granting a

+2 result bonus to any Weariness tests.

EA–7. HALLS OF WAITING: Where once this place was a hallowed hall given over to the Dwarves' dead, it is now an empty, looted ruin. Bones are scattered about, a thick layer of dust coats the walls and floors, and opaque cobwebs hang from the ceiling. Long rows of stone tombs, all torn open, their contents scattered, sit in all four rooms of this complex.

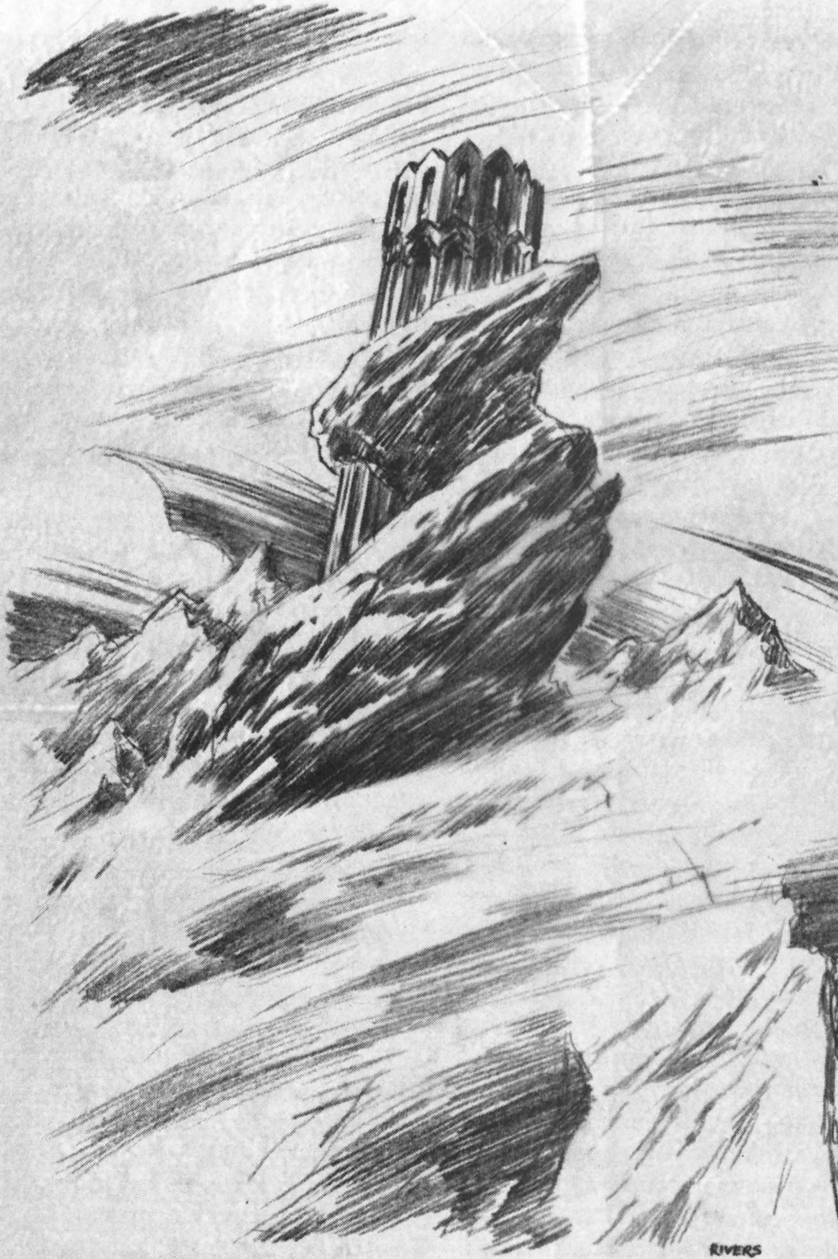
The Orcs have plundered the treasures once kept here, and many of the bones show signs of their foul teeth. Finding, recovering, and properly burying these remains could be an important goal of Balin or any other Dwarf who ventures into Moria. The great rift and the proximity to the Orc-controlled Mines make an expedition to this chamber a dangerous task at best.

EA–8. UPPER ARMOURIES OF WESTERN DEEPS: One of the most important sites in this section of Moria, the Upper Armouries housed some of the finest arms and armour produced by the Dwarves. The three outer chambers of the armouries have long since been thoroughly looted, but the secret chamber at the hall's western end still safely holds its treasures.

Built into the wall here is a Dwarf-gate of cunning construction. Once it was covered in an elaborate pattern of loops and whorls etched in *mithril*. To open the door, a Dwarf had to insert a small sliver of *mithril* into a slight imperfection built into the pattern. The Orcs simply tried to hack away at the precious metal, never realising the pattern's true purpose. While the three eastern chambers are now bare of all save dust and dirt, the hidden chamber holds a king's ransom in the finest blades, axes, and mail.

EA–9. WARDER'S COURT: These two large, vaulted chambers once served as the administrative and social centre of the Western Deeps. The warder charged with keeping watch over the Mines, organising the Dwarves of the area, and overseeing the watchers stationed here lived in these chambers with his family and trusted lieutenants. The rooms directly connected to these two courts were used for living quarters, storage, and other mundane uses. The southernmost chamber was a fest-hall in which the Dwarves entertained guests and discussed political matters with visitors from Dwarrowdelf.

The north court has a 30-foot-high, vaulted ceiling and was used for large parties and other public events. A towering statue of Durin, long since defaced by the Orc-invaders, once smiled from the room's north end on the crowds of Dwarves that gathered here. Stone benches arranged in neat rows around long, low, stone tables dominate this room. The four chambers connected to this area were used primarily for cooking and storage. A large oven in the southwestern room is fitted with long, iron pipes that vent smoke out of this area. At one time, the Orcs used this chamber as a rallying point for their exploration and looting of Moria. Shattered, curved



Orc-swords, refuse, and other bits of garbage are signs of their occupation.

Currently, Orc-patrols commonly use this chamber as a landmark and resting point. If the characters camp here overnight, make a Peril test at a –4 test penalty to see if Orcs stumble upon them.

EA–10. Office of the Watch: The military command centre of this area, these chambers once held the offices and barracks for the commanders of the watch. Maps of the Mines and other portions of Moria hung from the wall, allowing the commander to plot a defence, track supplies, and co-ordinate the watch's schedule. While the Orcs have thoroughly ransacked this place, the characters could uncover maps, records, and other items that might prove helpful in exploring Moria.

EA–11. Watcher's Way: A primary guard point and defensive position responsible for watching this end of Durin's Way, the guard chambers in this region were constantly staffed, even in the most peaceful of times. The pillared room was designed to provide an easily erected, durable barricade. Great slats of iron were stored in the chamber north of the pillars. In case of an attack, these bars would be wedged between the room's wall and the featureless, thick pillars that flank the doorways, creating a simple but resilient barrier. Scavenging Orcs have carried off most of the bars, but a few of the heavy, unwieldy objects remain.

This entire region is particularly dangerous, as the Orcs keep watch from the Mines below for traffic moving into or out of Durin's Way. Any loud noises or disturbances made here, such as a rock dropped down the well in the guardroom just east of the pillared chamber, automatically alert the Orcs. When this happens, increase the Peril level in all of Moria by +1.

EA–12. Barracks: The chambers in this area served as living quarters for the guards assigned to this region. Hacked, rotted, straw mattresses, shattered stone tables, and other wreckage indicate this area's purpose. A thorough search of these chambers may turn up a dagger, a belt buckle, or a usable tool, but little of real value.

DURIN'S TOWER AND THE ENDLESS STAIR

Long thought lost to the Dwarves, this tower stands at the utmost peak of Silvertine. Crafted in ages past in secret by Durin IV with the aid of several trusted retainers, this tower and the Endless Stair beneath it were meant to mark the Dwarves' mastery of the three peaks of Moria: Redhorn, Silvertine, and Cloudyhead. While Durin IV meant this place to be a secret, inner sanctum for his line, the knowledge of its location died along with him when he fell at the hands of the Balrog.

The Endless Stair runs from the very lowest depths of Moria's Mines to Durin's Tower, high atop Silvertine's snowy peak. Secret passages—none visible to the naked eye and all requiring spoken watchwords—dot the Stair as it winds its way through Moria's many levels. Though other secret entrances may be hidden within Moria, two entrances to the Endless Stair are:

A hidden doorway located on Durin's Way, five miles east of the Western Deeps. This door may be opened by speaking the Khuzdul phrase 'From the heart to the crown.'

A door hidden within the lower layers of the Mines opens to a long, twisting passage that leads to the Endless Stair's base. This door may only be opened by tapping three times upon it and speaking 'From earth to air' in Khuzdul.

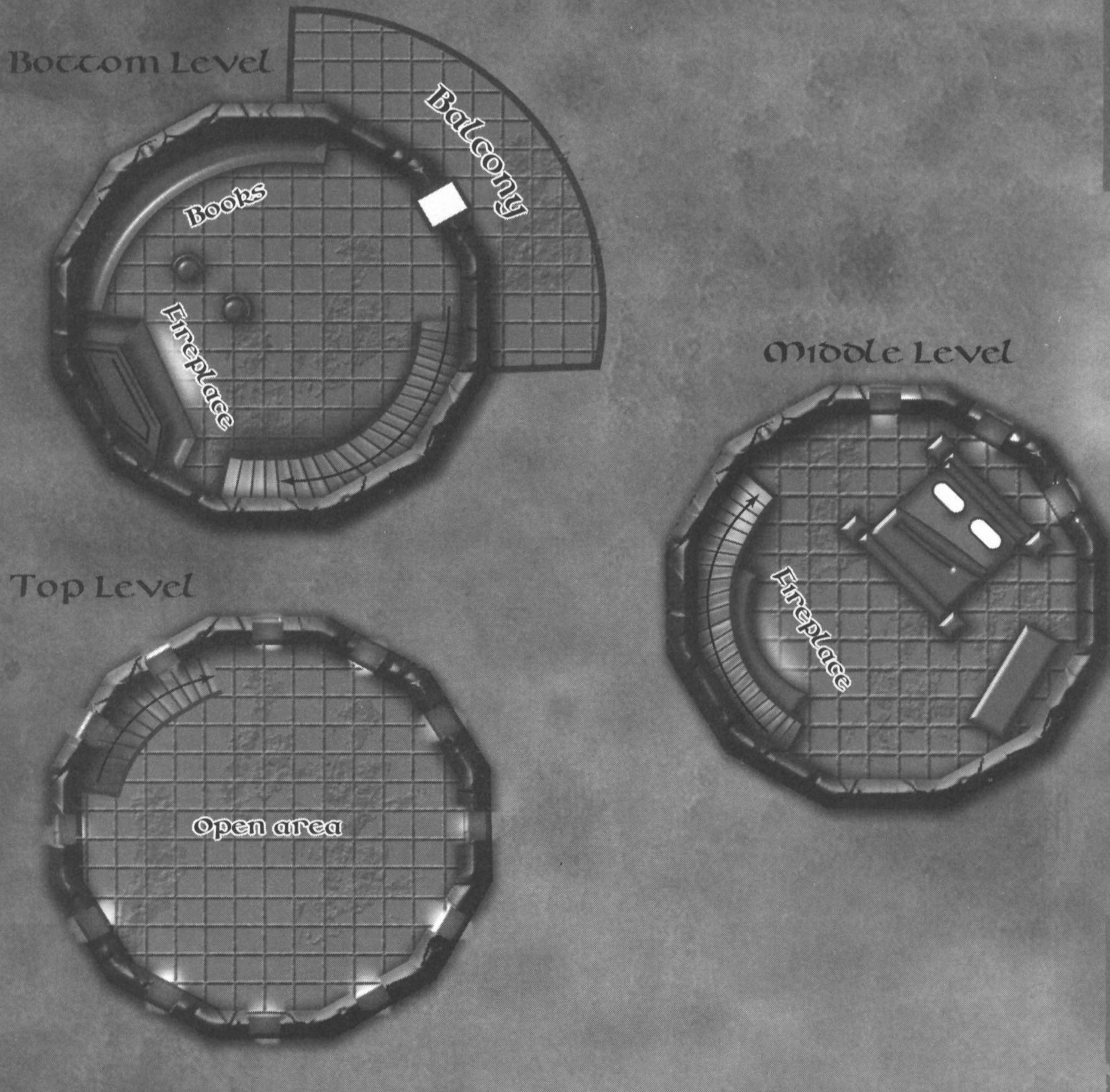
The Balrog knows of both of these entrances and others. If sorely pressed in combat, it flees to the Stair to escape pursuit.

THE ENDLESS STAIR

Winding several miles upward, this spiral staircase runs from the lower mine levels to Silvertine's peak. The stair bears no special designs or marks of its purpose. It is merely a plain stone staircase that could easily be mistaken for any other passage within Moria. The Balrog's use of it has left the stairs cracked and broken in some areas, requiring a Climb test (TN 5) to scramble up some portions that have been reduced to little more than rubble.

The slow, steady ascent tests the endurance and mettle of those who would travel to Durin's Tower. The stair winds over four miles up from its very base, and the steady, upwards slope makes it an arduous journey. Ascending the Endless Stair counts as

DURIN'S TOWER


Bottom Level
Balcony
Books
Fireplace
Middle Level
Fireplace
Top Level
Open area

1 Square = 1 Yard

a Demanding task for purposes of Weariness tests, even if the characters proceed at a slow pace. The monotony and suffocating feel of the Stair wears away at a traveller's mind and body in equal measure.

DURIN'S TOWER

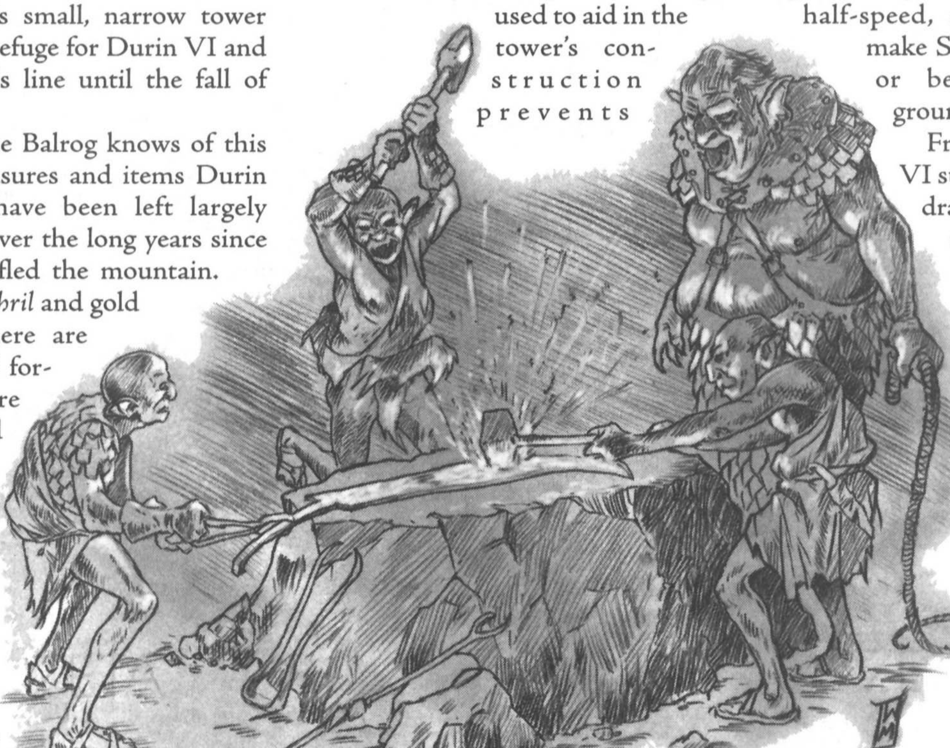
This structure—located atop Silvertine's peak—is a testament to the skill, dedication, and ingenuity of the Dwarves. Carved from the mountain rock, this small, narrow tower was a private refuge for Durin VI and the rest of his line until the fall of Moria.

Though the Balrog knows of this place, the treasures and items Durin stored here have been left largely undisturbed over the long years since the Dwarves fled the mountain. While the *mithril* and gold items kept here are worth a small fortune, the lore preserved within the tower is far more valuable. Durin kept his personal journal along with extensive maps of Moria in his private library here.

FIRST FLOOR: Set aside as a private chamber, the walls here are lined with stone bookcases piled high with scrolls, leather-bound tomes, and slimmer volumes. Here, in solitude, Durin VI planned Moria's future. The books are all written in Khuzdul, and in many cases important passages are kept in moon-letters.

Should the characters recover these volumes and return them to the Dwarves, they gain the benefits of the Dwarf-friend edge. (Apply the effects given for Elf-friend to any Dwarves the characters encounter.) The lore found here was long thought to have been lost forever, and the Dwarves have become eager to recover it. Extensive maps of Moria illustrate the locations of many treasure vaults, hidden chambers, and other secrets. In addition, the collection of books includes journals kept by Durin's line, a priceless memento of the Dwarves.

In addition to the small office here, a stone door opens eastwards to a stone balcony. The powerful magic used to aid in the tower's construction prevents snow from ever building up here and deflects the mighty winds that whirl around Silvertine. A majestic, sweeping view of the mountain and the regions around it inspires and invigorates characters here, allowing them to remove one level of Weariness each day when they visit this place.



SECOND FLOOR: The inner personal chambers of Durin's heirs, this room contains a small stone bed, a fireplace, several old, now mouldering rugs, and a stone armoire carved from the tower's rock. The armoire contains several sets of clothes long since ruined by age, but neatly folded within it are two corslets of *mithril* mail.

THIRD FLOOR: The tower's roof is an open area ringed by battlements three feet in height. As with the porch set in the first floor, snow never accumulates here. However, the fierce mountain winds scour the tower's roof, battering anyone who attempts to stand here. All physical actions, such as combat, suffer a –2 test result penalty. Furthermore, after attempting anything other than moving at half-speed, all characters must make Strength tests (TN 5) or be knocked to the ground.

From this point, Durin VI surveyed his realm and drank in its beauty. The mountain winds, while fierce, are refreshing and invigorating, and this vista inspires awe and wonder in those who look upon it.

THE MINES OF MORIA

While the halls and passages of Moria's upper levels may seem confusing to a traveller, they were at least designed in a purposeful, directed manner. The Mines, on the other hand, never followed a set plan. Because the Dwarves simply followed the precious minerals they sought wherever their veins led, the Mines are full of sudden twists, serpentine curves, and seemingly random dead ends. Generally speaking, the Mines are composed of two separate lodes, the Redhorn and Silvertine. An area of Upperdeeps lies above each lode, and a single Underdeeps area underlies both.

THE UPPERDEEPS

Once mine areas themselves, over time, these levels of Moria were refined until they served as living quarters and work space for the miners who continued excavating below. Unlike the other sections of the Mines, the corridors here feature the same craftsmanship and construction as Moria's upper levels.

During Moria's heyday, the Upperdeeps served as a system of roads and paths that connected the Mines to Moria's upper regions. Their corridors are built wide and tall, with grooved channels cut into the floor where mine carts were used to haul ore and rock. A complex system of chains and pulleys allowed the Dwarves to haul massive carts laden high with ore up from the Mines. The Orcs still make use of these mechanisms, though where once a dozen Dwarves laboured to pull a cart up the slopes a single enslaved Cave-troll now handles the work.

The chambers in this area were used primarily for offices, minor workshops, and temporary living quarters. A few scattered groups of Orcs, primarily those bands with little status in the hierarchy of Moria, dwell here. While the Orcs of the Upperdeeps typically lack skill and cunning in battle, their eagerness to bring down their enemies and help advance their renown leads them to attack with a fearless abandon. They attack in successive waves, rarely yielding a foot of ground despite the casualties they sustain.

THE UNDERDEEPS

The lowest portions of Moria's Mines, the passages of the Underdeeps are rough tunnels cut through the rock with mattocks and picks. Also littered throughout the Underdeeps are titanic caverns that hold subterranean lakes and portions of an underworld sea. Thus, in addition to providing gold, silver, and *mithril*, this area of the Mines was important for the water it supplied to Moria's upper reaches. Each day, teams of Dwarves filled large casks of fresh water from the springs, pools, and subterranean lakes here.

Now Orcs dwell here in large numbers. Though spoiled for other creatures, the water here is potable for Orcs and other creatures of the Shadow. Fish and mushrooms that once sustained the Dwarves feed the Orcs instead.

The Orcs have built many crude settlements alongside the Underdeeps' bodies of water, dragging blocks of stones down to erect simple shelters, foundries, and workshops. At the direction of the Balrog and under the whips of the most powerful of their kind, the Orcs mine the surrounding passages and forge weapons, armour, and other supplies for their own use or for export to Mordor.

While the Orcs live and work in these caverns, they are far from the masters of the Underdeeps. Indeed, many strange, fell creatures dwell within the deepest regions of the world. Awakened by the Balrog's resurgence, these beasts now stalk the endless passages that run through these regions.

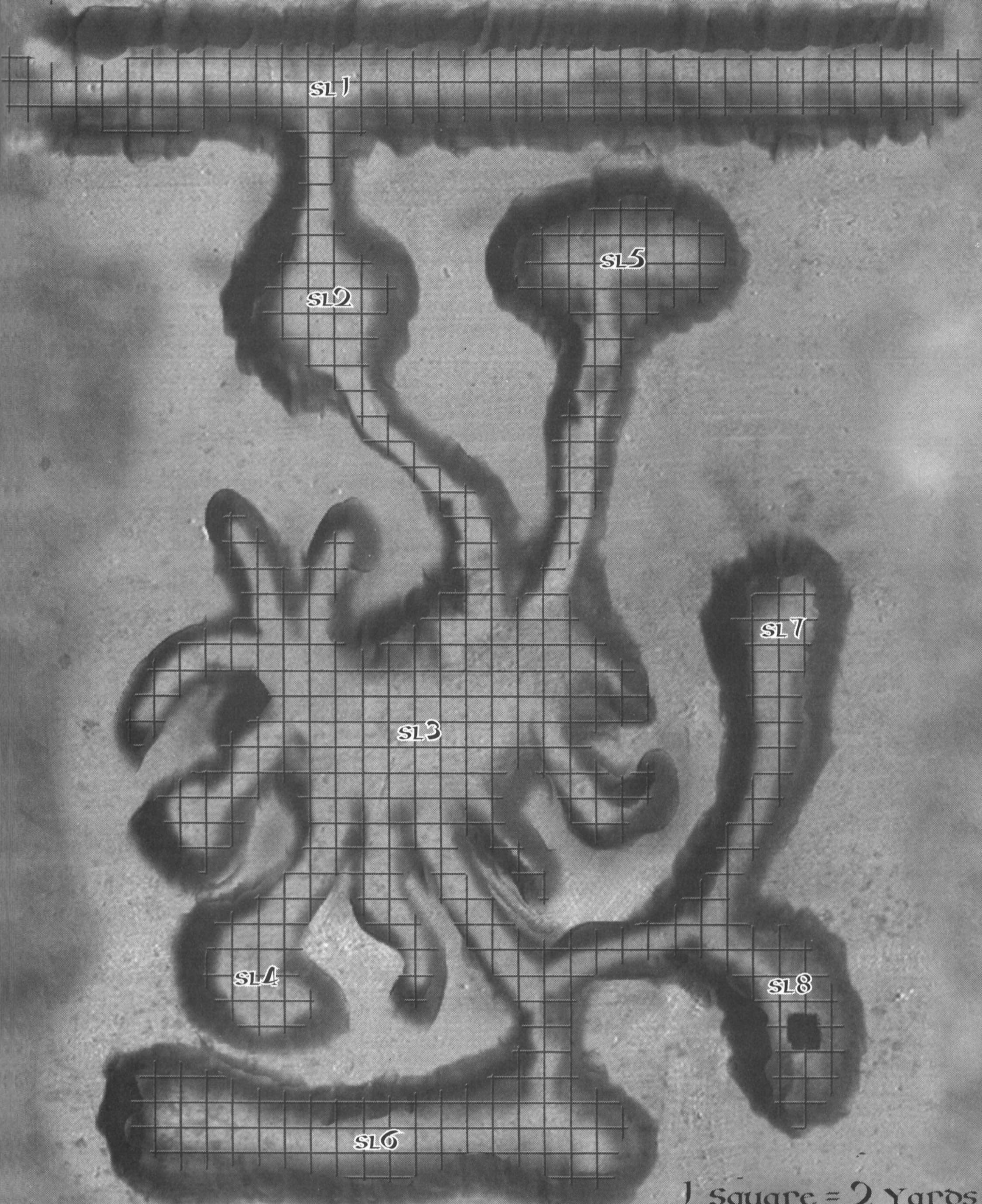
By the reckoning of the Dwarves, many of the tunnels in this region existed long before they plumbed the depths in their endless search for *mithril*. Even during Moria's most prosperous era, the Underdeeps were considered a dangerous, unpredictable place. A few old Dwarf-forts, hewn from the rock and designed to provide a defence against an attack from below, now serve as the centre of the Orcs' domain. The mightiest Orc-chieftains occupy these defensive points, their servants and vassals consigned to labour in the crude settlements built in the Underdeeps' largest caverns.

THE SILVERTINE LODES

These Mines were for many years the primary source of metal for the Dwarves of Moria. In many places, the mine passages are worked with skill and precision equal to that found in the Deeps of Dwarrowdelf: the Silvertine Lodes are easily the least cramped area of the Mines region. In places where the Dwarves discovered large veins of metals, mined them, and left behind large, open cavities, they tunnelled out the remaining rock to form huge, vaulted chambers. In these rooms, the Dwarves kept food, water, tools, and other supplies.

Despite the fact that individual chambers and hallways are not overly cramped, the Silvertine Lodes are a dizzying maze of passages, tunnels, and vaults. Over the years, the Dwarves tunnelled not only southwards from Moria, but also to the east and west in their unending quest for *mithril* and other valued metals. To keep the work here properly organised, Dwarf-runes were carved into each passage, naming it and numbering it for the miners' reference. However, in many regions these monikers were arbitrarily parcelled out, making it difficult for explorers unfamiliar with the full lay of the Mines to use the labels to their fullest. Still, the markings make it possible for an attentive traveller to find his way back the mine's entrance. Even the Orcs, who normally revel in destroying the Dwarves' works, have left the marking undisturbed.

SILVERTINE LODES SAMPLE ORC MINING CAMP


SL1
SL2
SL5
SL3
SL7
SL4
SL8
SL6

1 Square = 2 Yards

A Sample Orc-camp

The following text describes a sample Orc mining camp somewhere within the Silvertine Lodes. It serves as an example you can either use in play or as a starting point for additional development. The locations here correspond to the map on the previous page labelled 'Silvertine Lodes Sample Orc Mining Camp.'

SL–1. Entrance Tunnel: This wide, smooth tunnel was once used to carry supplies down to the far reaches of the lodes from the upper mine areas. At the direction of the Balrog, the Orcs broke through this tunnel and mined to the west, uncovering a vein of iron they now plunder for Moria's weapon and armour foundries.

SL–2. Guard Chamber: Four Orcs keep watch here, primarily for slaves who attempt to break free from captivity. Though tribes sometimes launch raids on their enemies' mines and cave networks, the Balrog is known to slaughter any foolish enough to meddle in business relating to Moria's operations. As this mine produces metal bound for the weapon shops, its guards believe the area is proof against attacks from rival Orc-bands. The guards suffer a –2 penalty to Observe tests made to note intruders approaching from the east. If the guards are attacked, three stand and fight while the fourth runs for the common chamber to alert the rest of the tribe. After five rounds of combat, the guards break and run for their lives—unless the battle's tide is in their favour.

SL–3. Common Chamber: This wide, circular chamber is dotted with crude cave mouths that serve as sleeping chambers for the Orcs that work here. The small chamber to the south is kept blocked off with iron bars. The Orcs' slaves live here when they are not forced by the lash to descend into the Mines. For the most part, these slaves are Orcs taken from other tribes, but Men and other Free Peoples are sometimes also enslaved by Orcs. A dozen Orc-slaves are here resting and sleeping at any given time. They require three rounds to awaken, find their weapons, and join any fray.

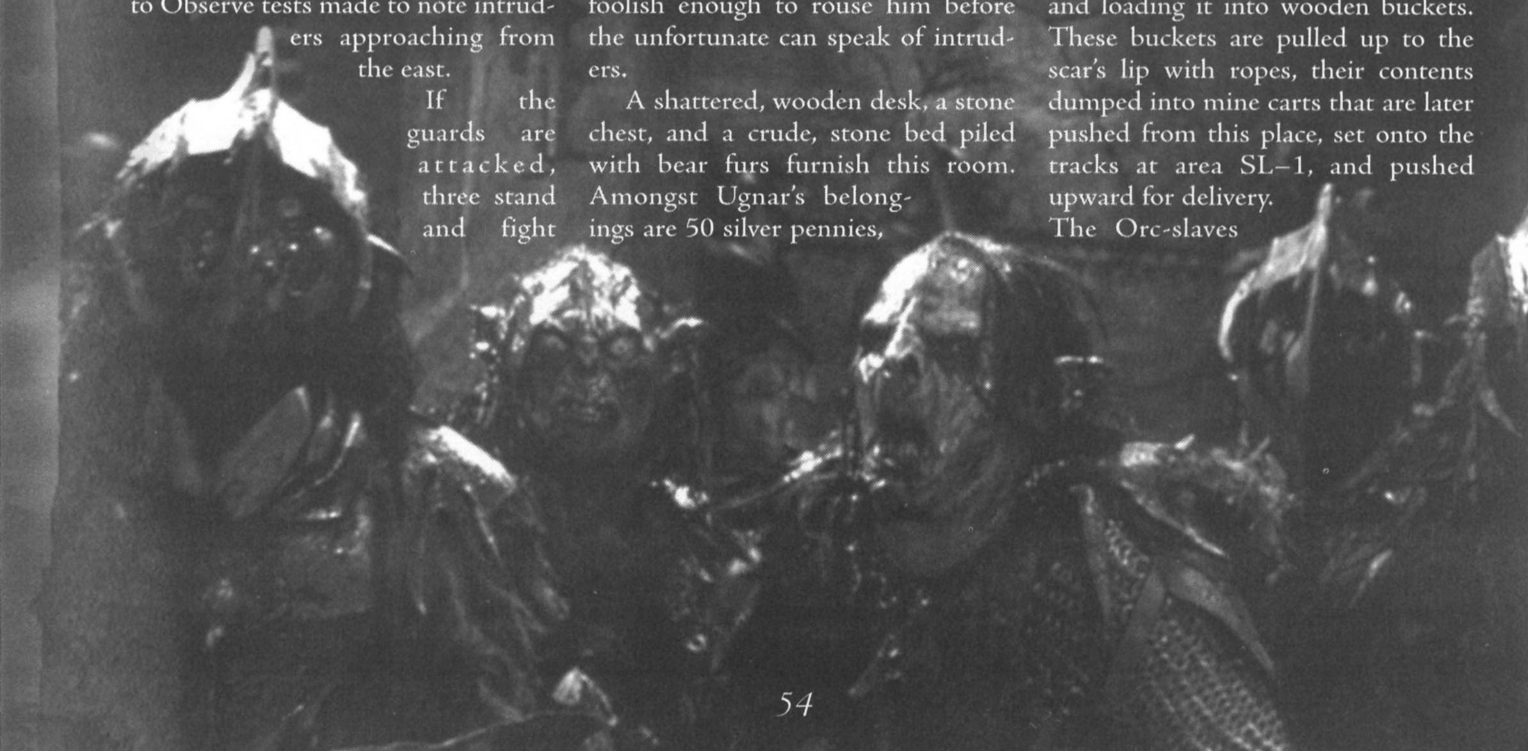
SL–4. Chief's Caves: The leader of this operation, a burly Uruk named Ugnar, spends most of his time here. He hates wasting his days watching over the Orcs and would much rather have a military command that would enable him to slaughter the Free Peoples and take loot in battle. He overindulges in drink and is slow to respond to any attack. His first reflex is to demand peace and quiet, and he may be so enraged as to kill any Orc foolish enough to rouse him before the unfortunate can speak of intruders.

A shattered, wooden desk, a stone chest, and a crude, stone bed piled with bear furs furnish this room. Amongst Ugnar's belongings are 50 silver pennies, a filthy piece of parchment, and a tiny *mithril* key. The parchment is inscribed with moon-letters that reveal the location of a treasure vault hidden near the market place of the Western Deeps. The key opens this chamber, which contains two finely carved silver goblets and a plain *mithril* ring. Ugnar knows the parchment contains some sort of secret writing, but he has not been able to figure out its secret. If pressed, he tries to use it to bribe intruders to spare him if the fighting goes poorly.

SL–5. Troll Pen: For a while, Ugnar kept a Cave-troll to work the Mines and keep the slaves obedient. However, his commander requisitioned the beast for more pressing duty in the upper mine areas. This transfer occurred only a few days past. The Troll's refuse and signs of its occupation are still fresh, possibly leading the characters to believe a Troll still dwells within these caves. Ugnar plays on this fear, and if the heroes corner him he hints that the Troll is nearby and could return at any moment.

SL–6. The Mines: This jagged scar carved from the earth drops 50 feet downward. Near the bottom along the western wall, a dozen Orcs labour with picks, mining iron ore and loading it into wooden buckets. These buckets are pulled up to the scar's lip with ropes, their contents dumped into mine carts that are later pushed from this place, set onto the tracks at area SL–1, and pushed upward for delivery.

The Orc-slaves



here hate their overseers, but they hate the Free Peoples even more. If discovered, they feign weakness, then attack with their picks any who draw near to them.

SL–7. STORAGE: Several barrels of water, foul beer, and boxes loaded with dried meat fill this room. A few spare picks hang from pegs.

SL–8. OUBLIETTE: This deep, dark pit is used to punish slaves who rebel against Ugnar and his troops. A length of coiled rope anchored by a spike hammered into the wall rests near the pit's edge. In battle, the Orcs try to force their enemies down this hallway and push them into the pit, using the force of their numbers.

THE REDHORN LODES

For a time, this section of the Mines was the most prosperous in Moria and heralded a new era of growth and wealth for the Dwarves. Great veins of *mithril* unearthed here drew miners like moths to a flame, yet it was here that Moria's final fate was sealed. Greedy Dwarf-miners, heedless of the signs that their effort would come to ill, unearthed the resting place of the Balrog, awakened it, and unleashed its evil upon Middle-earth. In this manner, Moria's greatest treasure turned to her deepest sorrow.

The mine passages here are narrow and ragged, as the Dwarves pressed forward quickly in their avarice, to claim as much *mithril* as possible. In some areas, hollowed spaces that once held great veins of ore were converted to bedchambers. Crude hammocks and other bedding can still be found here, as the Dwarves worked until near exhaustion, slept within the Mines, and returned to their toil upon awakening.

The passages rarely run more than five feet tall and three feet across, as the Dwarves cared more for making headway through the rock than crafting tunnels that were comfortable for travel. The presence of collapsed passages—a rarity in Dwarf-tunnels, due to the keen skill of their fashioners—testifies to the haste and recklessness with which the Dwarves mined this region.

Wide, open spaces punctuate the Redhorn Lodes' narrow passages. Rather than enlarge these glory holes and use them for storage, workrooms, and other purposes, the Dwarves merely tunnelled onward. In a few places, small pools of water fill the lower reaches of these chambers, but this region is mostly dry.

More importantly, the atmosphere here is thick and ominous. The Balrog's malign influence hangs over everything. Torches and lamps glow with a greenish radiance, illuminating the way with a sickly light. Sounds—even whispers—echo throughout the tunnels, and strange moaning and grinding sounds emanate from side passages and seemingly blind tunnels.

CARADHRAS

In addition to the malign influence of the Balrog, there is another powerful demonic power at work upon the Redhorn mountain. Caradhras the Cruel, a *gadrahoth*—place-demon—infests the mountain. Caradhras the Cruel is described in detail in *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic.*

While in the Redhorn Lodes, the Free Peoples suffer a –2 penalty to Willpower tests and must spend quadruple the normal time to regain Weariness levels. Furthermore, when testing for Weariness, treat the characters as if the activities they engage in are one category worse in terms of strain and toil. For example, characters engaged in activity rated as Demanding are treated as if their tasks were Extreme.

BALROG'S LAIR

This foul, corrupt nest served as the Balrog's lair during its long years of dormancy. A single large, irregular chamber, the lair is interrupted by stalactites and stalagmites of enormous size. Combined with the irregular floor, navigating the room is quite dangerous: a failed TN 5 Nimbleness test—required every time movement speedier than a walk is undertaken—results in a nasty fall or sprained ankle. The place reeks of rotten flesh.

Piles of ruined slag are scattered everywhere, for rather than hoard the treasures offered it by the Orcs, the Balrog destroys them, gaining perverse pleasure from the destruction of objects held dear by the Free Peoples. Near the entrance to this lair, a great throne of slag and basalt stands where the Balrog takes 'audience' with the cowering Orcs and others who sometimes come here to offer their tribute. More often, this loot is simply left in the passage that leads to this chamber, claimed later at the Balrog's whim.

Anyone entering this chamber must make a Willpower test (TN 20) or suffer a –2 penalty to all tests. Affected characters see shadowy figures lurking at the periphery of their vision, hear harsh, rasping whispers from the shadows, and are plagued with the feeling that some terrible beast watches from a distance.

Of course, this is also where Durin's Bane, the Balrog of Moria, is most likely to be found. Although the creature most often sleeps uneasily upon a great slab of rock, it automatically detects the presence of creatures in the tunnel that leads to this cave. Unless the heroes approach when the Balrog is known to be in some other area of Moria, its cloak of fire and shadow is the first thing they see when they set foot in this awful chamber.

Chapter Four

BUILDING MORIA

'There hammer on the anvil smote,
There chisel clove, and graver wrote;
There forged was blade, and bound was hilt;
The delver mined, the mason built.'
— The Fellowship of the Ring

This chapter presents a series of rules for creating challenges, mapping out locations, and fleshing out Moria for use in your adventures and chronicles.

PERIL

Moria is a dangerous place that has spelled the doom of many who have dared enter its halls. The Peril system models the varying levels of danger throughout its regions. In a nutshell, it measures how dangerous an area is and how likely the characters are to encounter difficulties there. The higher an area's Peril rating, the more difficult it is for the heroes to evade encounters when they travel through it. On the other hand, as the heroes defeat the Orcs, Trolls, and other threats that dwell within Moria, they can also reduce a region's Peril rating.

For every four hours the characters spend in an area of Moria they must make a Peril test to determine if they encounter creatures, traps, or other dangers. A Peril test is a combined Stealth test against a Peril TN. The leader of the Peril test is always the character with the worst total modifier (including skill bonuses and attribute modifiers) to his Stealth test. After all, a group may only travel as quietly as its least stealthy member. Peril TNs for Moria's various regions and travel routes are listed on the Vertical Exaggeration of Moria map.

A Peril test's degree of success is referenced on Table 4.1: Peril Test Results to determine what sort of danger, if any, the characters encounter. If the characters fare poorly on a Peril test, they face great dangers. On the other hand, if the characters' Peril test is a success they evade

Ben Wootten 02

detection and may even have a chance to ambush and defeat some of the minions of Shadow who infest their surroundings.

Finally, don't allow the Peril system to dictate what must happen in your game. Instead, think of it as a guide that can inspire your imagination and ease the creative burden.

ENCOUNTERS

Once you have determined the type of encounter the characters must deal with, you can randomly determine an encounter from the appropriate table, pick an encounter from the table, or construct an encounter using the table's guidelines. If you wish to add some variety to the encounters you design, the scenarios listed in one encounter table can be adapted to work with a different table in most circumstances. In any case, game statistics of the suggested adversaries can be found in Chapter Five.

Note that the roster of Orcs (and others) associated with each table represents a challenge for player characters with no advancements. Against more powerful heroes, you may opt to add additional or more skilled opponents.

OTHER USES FOR PERIL

In addition to using Peril tests as a tool to determine the dangers the characters face, you can also modify its results to better suit the needs of a particular story. The following suggestions can alter the end result of a Peril test.

THE SHADOW GATHERS: When the Fellowship made their way through Moria, the Orcs waited until they could mass in great numbers before attacking. To simulate this, you can use Peril tests to determine how quickly the enemy can gather their numbers to attack. When the characters fail a Peril test, note the number of Orcs they should encounter and increase the TN of all future Peril tests by +5. Rather than stage piecemeal attacks, the Orcs gather their forces for one dramatic strike. The Peril system works best in this manner if the characters have many advancements and would not find the example encounters much of a threat. This option is most dramatically effective if the heroes are aware they have stirred Moria's occupants. Perhaps they hear the distant Orc-drums or catch glimpses of Orc-scouts trailing them in the distance. Once the Orcs have gathered in sufficient numbers to pose a threat, they stage an attack on the heroes when the characters have entered a dead-end corridor or other area where escape is difficult.

OTHER THREATS: Orcs and Trolls are sometimes the least of a traveller's worries within Moria. Traps, collapsed tunnels, pits within the floor, and other dangers can also threaten the characters as they make their journey. In addition to the template encounters, refer to the section on Traps that follows this one for additional obstacles you can set before the characters.

MODIFYING PERIL

As the characters defeat Orcs within Moria's halls, they slowly whittle down their enemy's strength and make the Mines safer. This system is particularly important in chronicles in which the characters seek to reclaim Moria, such as those set during the time of Balin's colony or after the War of the Ring.

When the characters make a Peril test, the result and their actions in the encounter modify the area's Peril rating. Table 4.2 gives a point value for each type of creature the characters are likely to encounter in Moria. For every 10 points worth of creatures the characters defeat in a region, reduce its Peril TN by 1. However, for every two weeks that pass without the characters' attacking or exploring a particular region, increase its Peril TN by 2, up to its original level, as Orcs come from other areas to replace the fallen.

You can also create encounters and attach to them Peril modifiers of your own design. For example, you may decide that the Orcs that infest the Second Deep are led by a fearsome Uruk. If the characters slay this chieftain, the remaining Orcs scatter and flee to the Mines or leave Moria altogether. Obviously, such an action should result in a significant reduction of the Second Deep's Peril TN. Also, just as you may design actions or scenarios that allow the characters to decrease a region's Peril, so too can their failures or mistakes cause it to rise. For example, if the characters let a powerful Uruk-captain escape from their clutches, he may return to the scene of his defeat with an even stronger force.

TRAPS

A trap is any mechanical device built to injure or capture the creature that triggers it. Traps work best when used to make an already dangerous situation even more perilous. They can also serve as deterrents and threats that allow characters less skilled in combat to take centre stage. A trap has the following game statistics, which describe the danger it poses.

OBSERVE TN: The Observe TN is actually two numbers. The first is the TN of Observe tests to notice the trap when the characters actively search. The second number, in parentheses, is the TN to spot the trap when no particular effort is made to look for it. Generally, the second, passive test is made when a hero approaches within three yards of the trap, but for some traps this distance may be larger or smaller, at the Narrator's discretion.

The more complex and intricate a trap, the higher is the Observe TN. For example, a simple tripwire created by an Orc is much easier to spot than an expertly crafted pressure plate built by a Dwarf-craftsman. When creating your own traps, use the sample Observe TNs listed in the core rulebook on page 131 as a guide.

DEFEAT TN: By using certain skills, the characters can disarm or overcome a trap. Each trap lists a defeat TN and the skills that may be used to disable it. A character may use any of the listed skills against the defeat TN. On a success, the character disables the trap. Note that when Craft is listed, only Craft skills applicable to the trap's design or construction may be used against it. Craft: Baking is of little use in defeating most traps, while Craft: Woodworking would obviously help disable a snare made from wood.

If the players undertake a plan to deactivate or bypass a trap without

TABLE 4.1: PERIL TEST RESULTS TABLE

DEGREE OF SUCCESS	RESULT
Disastrous Failure	The characters trip an alarm or otherwise cause a great, noisy disturbance. A powerful force of Orcs gathers to attack them from ambush. Use Encounter Table A.
Complete Failure	The characters create enough noise to alert an Orc-war party or other organised group. The Orcs are unable to prepare an ambush. Use Encounter Table B.
Failure	The characters blunder into a small group of Orcs who attack immediately. Use Encounter Table C.
Marginal Success	The characters manage to evade detection and travel without encountering any threats.
Complete Success	The characters manage to evade detection and travel without encountering any threats.
Superior Success	The characters not only evade detection, they come across a small band of Orcs they may either avoid or attack from ambush. Use Encounter Table D.
Extraordinary Success	Moving in utter silence, the characters come upon either a camped Orc-patrol or an Orc dwelling area. In the case of a permanent dwelling, the characters gain a +2 bonus to future Peril tests in this region, as they now know to avoid it. Use Encounter Table E.

TABLE 4.2 PERIL REDUCTION

THREAT	POINTS
Orc-warrior or Archer	1/4
Orc-champion	1/2
Uruk-hai	1/2
War Chief	1
Captain	10
Cave-troll	5

ENCOUNTER TABLE A: MASSED ATTACKS

The characters blunder into a large force of Orcs that consists of two champions, four archers, and six warriors. On a 1d6 roll of 1, the Orcs also have a Cave-troll with them. Each of these encounters assumes the characters have blundered into a bad situation. When creating scenarios of your own, use these as models for the tactical disadvantages you should inflict on the heroes.

1. SHOOTING GALLERY: The Orcs prepare an attack at a point where they can fire upon the heroes from cover or from across an insurmountable obstacle, such as a wide rift in the floor, a partially collapsed passage, or a set of arrow slits hacked into a wall. The heroes must retreat and find a side passage that leads to the Orcs' position. Meanwhile, the Orc-warriors guard the corridor and await the characters' counterattack. It is possible that the only path to the Orcs is inaccessible from where the heroes are positioned, forcing them to run a gauntlet of arrows to continue their journey. Substitute up to four of the Orc-warriors for Orc-archers for this encounter.

2. PINCER ATTACK: The characters find themselves caught between two groups of Orcs, either as part of an ambush or simply due to poor luck on the characters' part. Perhaps the Orc-archers take cover down one passage and fire on the characters while the remainder of the war party catches the heroes from behind.

3. SECRET PASSAGE: An ancient Dwarf-door set into the passage allows the Orcs to quietly creep out and ambush the characters. Allow the heroes to make Observe tests opposed by the Orcs' Stealth skill, with the Orcs gaining a +3 bonus to their test due to their sudden appearance. The Orcs may burst into the corridor as the characters move down it, appearing in the characters' midst and cutting the group in half. Otherwise, they sneak out from their hiding place and trail the characters, waiting for them to camp for the night before attacking. Optionally, the Orcs may watch from a Dwarf-door built at a common resting site along the path. When the characters bed down for the night, the Orcs surge forth to attack them.

4. DEAD-END ATTACK: The characters take a wrong turn and head down a passage that ends in an impassable pile of rubble, or find themselves in a room that has only one entrance. Unfortunately for them, a party of Orcs catches sight of them and takes that moment to attack. The characters must fight their way through the Orcs to escape.

5. CREEPING ATTACK: The Orcs spot the characters first but decide to trail the characters and gather a more powerful force to defeat them. They despatch two of their number to summon reinforcements while the rest remain behind the characters and trail them. Every half-hour, allow the characters to make Observe tests opposed by the Orcs' Stealth tests, using the single best Stealth skill total amongst the Orcs and giving the monsters a +2 modifier to their test for sneaking up behind the heroes. As long as the Orcs remain undiscovered, they gain an additional 1d6 Orc-warriors and archers (an equal split of each) as reinforcements every hour. The Orcs attack the heroes at the most opportune moment, but they wait at least an hour before making their move.

6. PURSUIT: The Orcs rush forward to attack, forming a single line of warriors supported by missile fire from the archers. Determined to defeat the characters at any cost, they fight to the death and relentlessly pursue any characters who attempt to flee the battle. To make matters worse, one of the Orc-champions bears a horn that he sounds if the Orcs lose more than half their numbers. One a 1d6 roll of 1, an additional 2d6 warriors respond to the call, arriving to the area in 2d6 minutes. Furthermore, add +5 to the TN of all Peril tests the heroes must make for the next two days.

ENCOUNTER TABLE B: PATROLS

An Orc-patrol consists of one champion, two archers, and four warriors. Each patrol enters the encounter with a slight tactical advantage over the characters.

1. HIGH GROUND: The Orc-patrol takes a position overlooking a corridor the characters are travelling through. The area ahead opens into a large cavern, and the corridor through it is actually a raised, narrow bridge. The Orcs attack from a gallery above and beside the bridge, raining arrows and rocks down upon the heroes.

2. STAIRS: The Orc-patrol hears the heroes' approach and prepares an attack on a flight of stairs along the characters' path. In preparation for the fight, the Orcs roll two large rocks to the top of the stairs. As the heroes make their way up the stairs, the Orcs push the rocks down towards them. Three Orcs working together can send a rock hurtling down the steps. Each character on the stairs must make a Swiftness test (TN 10) or be struck for 2d6+4 damage and knocked down to the bottom of the stairs for an additional 2d6 damage. The Orcs roll the second stone at the most opportune moment. Three of them ready it while the archers fire arrows at the characters.

3. DECOY: The Orcs in this area have devised a simple but cunning plan to defeat intruders. One lone Orc-sentry keeps watch on a corridor. When the characters come into his sight, he yells an alarm and flees down a side passage. The Orc moves just fast enough to keep the characters in his sight and even feigns stumbling in order to keep his pursuers close. He leads the characters to a chamber where his comrades wait in ambush.

4. TRAP: A simple snare built along the passage may catch one of the characters and draw an Orc-patrol to investigate. The trap is a simple tripwire strung across the corridor, rigged to drop a heavy rope net and ring an alarm bell. The net trap's attributes are given on page 65. After the trap is set off, an Orc-patrol arrives in 1d6+2 rounds to investigate.

5. HIDING PLACE: Hearing the characters approach, the Orcs quickly put into action their plans for an ambush. Two Orcs take up a position to draw the characters into a fight, while the rest hide behind a door, some debris, nearby stalagmites, or some other cover. Once the characters engage the first pair of Orcs, the others leap out from hiding and attack.

6. CAVE-TROLL: The patrol includes a Cave-troll. Upon hearing or seeing the characters, the Orcs unleash the beast from its chains and prod it into battle. They watch the fight from a distance, planning to loot the dead after the Troll finishes its foes. If the Troll is slain and more than half of the heroes have been reduced to Wounded or worse, the Orcs rush forward to attack. On the other hand, if the Troll is slain and the character have not suffered great damage, the Orcs flee the scene.

ENCOUNTER TABLE C: WANDERERS

A wandering band of Orcs consists of six warriors. If the Orcs succeed at an Observe test with a TN equal to the result of the characters' Peril test, they hear the party approaching and may have a chance to attempt Stealth tests of their own to surprise the party. Generally speaking, these types of encounters should begin with both parties on an even tactical footing.

1. QUICK ATTACK: Eager to attack but wary of the characters' skill, the Orcs rush forward to fight but quickly flee if the battle does not go in their favour. If two Orcs fall before any members of the party are reduced to Wounded or worse due to injury, the survivors flee. Otherwise the Orcs fight until they have slain a character, at which point they flee to report their encounter and brag of their success. If more than half the Orcs successfully escape, increase the Peril test TN of this area by +2 for one week afterward. The Orcs gather in larger numbers here to hunt down the characters.

2. CRAZED RUSH: The Orcs hear the characters approaching and decide to throw caution to the wind. They charge forward at top speed to overwhelm the characters as quickly as possible. The Orcs fight until half of them have fallen, at which point they scatter. Even if the Orcs have a chance to ambush the characters, they simply charge forward to attack. This encounter should take place in an area where the Orcs can reach the characters with a charge action. When the Orcs charge, allow each character to make an Observe test (TN 5) to react to the attack. Characters who fail this test are surprised.

3. STAND-OFF: As the characters round a corner, they come face to face with a band of Orcs who are preparing to move out after resting for a time. The Orcs stand frozen until the heroes act. If the characters attack, the Orcs fight on a 1d6 roll of 1–3, otherwise they flee. If the characters turn and run, the Orcs pursue them on a 1d6 roll of 1–3. In either case, if more than half the Orcs survive this encounter they spread word of the characters' intrusion. The Peril test TN of this area increases by +2 for one week.

4. GUARDROOM: The Orcs have established a crude guardroom along the characters' route. They have piled up large stones to serve as a barricade, and they watch the passageway from which the characters approach the chamber. These Orc-warriors all carry longbows in addition to their normal equipment. They fire upon the characters from behind cover. If the heroes manage to cross the barricade and attack in melee, the Orcs send a runner to alert their fellows in this area. In this case, regardless of the result of this battle the heroes must make a second Peril test against this region's TN +5. The barricade is crude but solidly built. It is four feet tall, allowing the Orcs to crouch behind it for cover. It takes one action to climb atop the barricade and move across it.

5. LOOSE CAVE-TROLL: A Cave-troll has broken loose in this area, and the Orcs have sent out search parties for it. The Orcs, leery of facing the Troll without the aid of their comrades, flee from the player characters if they attack. If the heroes give chase, the Troll is attracted to the sounds of battle. In this case, the enraged beast charges into the battle and attacks both sides with equal abandon. Randomly determine the direction from which the Troll approaches the fight.

6. FLY, YOU FOOLS!: The characters encounter a small band of Orcs who immediately attempt to escape. The Orcs are a scavenging party from a nearby camp who seek to alert their allies rather than risk their necks. With their first action, the Orcs move directly away from the characters. Unless the heroes can run down and defeat the Orcs, the survivors raise an alarm. The characters must make a second Peril test one hour after this encounter at TN +5 for this region. With the alarm raised, the Orcs dispatch war parties to hunt down the characters.

ENCOUNTER TABLE D: WATCH POINTS

Orc-watch points are normally occupied by two archers and four warriors. This table assumes that the characters have the advantage of detecting their foes first and may stage an ambush. The characters automatically notice the Orcs before the monsters see them and usually have a chance to avoid them if they choose to do so. Create your own encounter or use one from the list below.

1. GUARD CHAMBER: The Orcs have converted a room that lies near the characters' route into a guard chamber. The Orcs have a small fire lit, allowing the characters to detect the Orcs' presence and location with a successful Observe test (TN 10). If the characters fail this test, they proceed through the area but do not alert the Orcs unless they make a significant amount of noise. The Orcs cluster around the fire, busily preparing a vile stew. They suffer a –2 penalty to all Observe tests, as they are engrossed in their meal. The boiling stew can be used as a crude but effective missile weapon. Grabbing the pot inflicts 1d6 damage to a character not wearing gauntlets or thick gloves. The stew may be splashed onto a single target with a successful Ranged Combat test. The stew has a maximum range of three yards and inflicts 1d6 damage, along with a –2 penalty to all actions for one minute unless the target succeeds at a TN 10 Stamina test. Unless the Orcs are surprised (in which case they panic and reflexively grab their weapons), one of them attempts to fling the stew at the toughest-looking character.

2. BARRICADE: The Orcs have constructed a barricade in a corridor the characters must use, or down a side passage near their current path. The barricade is little more than rocks and debris piled in the midst of the passageway. The Orcs crouch behind it, currently more involved in an argument amongst themselves than in watching the corridor. A successful Observe test (TN 5) allows the characters to overhear the Orcs. The barricade is two yards wide. Anyone fighting atop it must make a Nimbleness test each round (TN 5) or suffer 1d6 damage and lose one action due to twisting an ankle or sliding on loose debris.

3. WATCHER: A single Orc stands guard along the passageway, slumped against a wall in a deep sleep. Nearby, the rest of the Orcs in this encounter sleep in a chamber or corridor branch. If the heroes can sneak up on and slay the watcher, they can continue on their way without delay. Sneaking up on the Orc requires a Stealth test (TN 10) to close the distance. On a failed test, the Orc awakens but is automatically considered surprised.

4. RUNNER: A single Orc watches a passage that runs near the characters' route. Luckily for the heroes, the Orc's back is to them as they move forward. The Orc is supposed to run to a nearby chamber where the rest of his band waits and alert them of any intruders. If the heroes can sneak up on the lone Orc, they can ambush him and in turn ambush his fellows. However, if they alert him to their presence, the Orc rushes to warn the patrol.

5. PEEK HOLES: The passage the heroes have chosen moves past a room set with peek holes that allow watchers to look into the corridor. Luckily for the characters, the Orcs are far from alert. The light from a small fire they have started shines through the holes. By ducking beneath the holes, the characters can evade this encounter. Otherwise, they can easily draw the Orcs into an ambush. Upon seeing or hearing an enemy in the corridor, the Orcs rush down a side passage that leads from their watch area to the corridor they guard. Eager to enter the fray, they suffer a –4 penalty to all Observe tests to notice ambushers or characters lurking in the shadows.

6. TRAP SETTERS: At a junction or intersection, the Orcs have erected a spring-loaded trap to catch rats or other vermin for food. As the characters approach the trap's location, they can hear a small group of Orcs busily at work resetting the trap and arguing over whether they should roast the rat they caught now or save it for later. The trap is a simple mechanism designed to drive a wooden stake into the ground when a creature breaks a trip wire. The Orcs attempt all Observe tests at a –5 penalty, as they are busy working or arguing. Five rounds after the party first notices the Orcs, the Orcs finish setting the trap and prepare to move on. If the characters attack before the Orcs move away—and achieve surprise—the Orcs accidentally set off the trap in their panic. It hits one of them, dealing 2d6 damage.

ENCOUNTER TABLE E: CAMPS

Orc-camps consist of one champion and eight warriors. Though armed for combat, most of these groups wander Moria as scavengers or explorers. When designing your own scenarios for this encounter, the Orcs should be at a severe disadvantage. They are distracted and easily ambushed, caught without their weapons, or easily avoided.

1. MINERS: The characters hear, from a long ways off, a party of Orc-miners who are either prospecting for metals in the Mines or enlarging a room in Moria's upper reaches, depending on where this encounter takes place. The Orcs' weapons and armour are kept stashed by their camping gear and supplies in a large pile. Any Orc who wishes to retrieve a weapon must spend two actions to dig through the gear and find one. Otherwise, the Orcs are forced to fight with their picks. Treat these items as mattocks, but on a disastrous failure the weapon's haft shatters due to its poor make. The Orcs suffer a −5 penalty to all Observe tests as they work and argue amongst themselves.

2. SCAVENGERS: The Orcs regularly sweep through the area, seeking out scraps of metal, hidden treasures, and other valuables they may have missed in their depredations. Four of them pull a large, heavy cart laden with a pair of anvils the Orcs have taken from a nearby workshop and hope to drag back down to the Mines. The rest of the Orcs are ahead of the cart, arguing over where to take the anvils. As luck would have it, the Orcs currently struggle to move the cart down a sloped passage without letting the thing slip loose and plough through them. The Orcs are involved in their work and suffer a −5 penalty to Observe tests. If the characters sneak up on the cart and give it a strong push (or otherwise try to force it to roll into the Orcs) they must make Strength tests with a +4 bonus opposed by a combined Strength test made by the four Orcs struggling with the cart. If heroes succeed in their test, the cart tumbles through the Orcs. They must all make Swiftness tests (TN 10) or suffer 2d6+4 damage and be knocked prone as the cart smashes through them.

3. RESTING PATROL: The characters stumble across the members of an Orc-patrol who have decided to spend their guard shift sleeping in an unused chamber. The characters can slip into the room and deal with the Orcs as they wish, or they can simply avoid the encounter.

4. ORC-ARGUMENT: Ahead in the passage, the characters can hear a band of Orcs engaged in a loud argument. The Orcs discovered a long-forgotten golden comb beneath a pile of rubble, and they now squabble over who has the rights to claim it. If the characters sit and watch, after a few minutes the argument erupts into violence. In the ensuing melee, five of the Orc-warriors are killed. If the heroes attack before then, the Orc-warriors attempt to kill their leader, grab the comb, and escape. Each time an Orc has the opportunity to attack a character or one of its fellows, it strikes at its comrade half the time.

5. TROLL-PEN: The Orcs have built a temporary holding area for Cave-trolls in a room up ahead of the characters. When the heroes approach, the Orcs are currently arguing over who has to feed the Troll currently kept within the cage. The patrol's champion holds the key to the pen. If the characters attack, the champion tries to unleash the Troll. However, if the heroes cut him down before he can open the cage they can easily slay the Troll with arrows after defeating the Orcs. When the champion attempts to open the cage, he must make a Wisdom test (TN 10) to keep his composure and pick out the correct key from a large ring of keys he carries.

6. ORC-BATTLE: The characters come across two groups of eight Orcs, each led by a champion, who loudly argue over who has the right of way. After two rounds of threats, the two sides attack. The characters can either sneak past the battle or pick off the survivors.

using one of the listed skills, use your own judgment. For example, a trap designed to drop a net on the characters might list Craft as a skill necessary to defeat it. If, instead, the characters use a long spear to snap the net's tripwire while standing beyond the area it covers, they have clearly defeated the trap, even though they did not use Craft. The defeat TN is an abstract method for handling traps. Never allow it to overshadow the players' ideas or plans.

Some traps cannot be defeated through use of a skill. Such traps have 'naught' listed for their defeat TN. It bears noting, however, that such traps can usually be avoided or defeated through a plan, as described above. A pit trap is an excellent example. A pit cannot be 'un-dug,' but could be walked around (avoided) or filled back in (plan).

AVOID TN: Even after an unwitting victim has set a trap off, he can often get out of the way in the nick of time. The avoid TN is the target number necessary to do so, and the reaction or other statistic in parentheses describes the attribute that must be used. Swiftness is the reaction most typically used to avoid traps, but other reactions, attributes, or skills are possible. Some traps cannot be avoided once they have been triggered. Such traps have 'naught' listed for their avoid TN.

EFFECT: A trap's Effect describes how it is triggered, how it operates, how much damage it does, and so forth. The most uncomplicated traps simply assail their victim with the equivalent of a melee attack. They have an effective Armed Combat score, which the trap tests against the target's Defence. Armour can absorb this damage as normal. Other traps are more complex and have more complicated effects which are described in more detail. When assigning damage for traps of your own design, consider the damage done by weapons similar to the trap (see page 205 of the core rulebook); by other dangerous effects inherent to the trap such as falling, drowning, and fire (see page 245 of the core rulebook); or simply use your creativity and best judgement.

TABLE 4.3: ARMED COMBAT SCORES OF SAMPLE TRAPS

TRAP TYPE	ARMED COMBAT SCORE
A crude, hastily built spiked beam	2
A simple trap built in a day	3
The average Orc-built trap	4
A cunning Orc-trap	5
The typical trap built by Dwarves	6
A sophisticated Dwarf-trap	8
A Dwarf-crafted mechanism of cunning design	10

TABLE 4.4: SAMPLE SWIFTNESS-BASED AVOID TNS

TRAP TYPE	SWIFTNESS TN
A slow, easily evaded mechanism	5
An average trap	10
A expertly concealed or unexpected trap	15
A trap which is hidden almost completely	20
A trap built with or enhanced by magic	25

SAMPLE TRAPS

The sample traps listed below should serve as a guide in creating your own. Use them as models or modify them for your own purposes.

CRUSHING BLOCK

OBSERVE TN: 20 (25)
DEFEAT TN: 20 (Stonecraft)
AVOID TN: 10 (Swiftness)
EFFECT: A common mechanism used by the Dwarves to protect tombs, treasuries, and other important locations in Moria, a crushing block drops a massive piece of stone down upon whoever triggers a pressure plate set into the floor, dealing 4d6+8 points of damage. The plate is usually disguised as a flagstone or brick. Stepping on it causes a chain that holds the stone above in place to unlatch, dropping the stone down.

NET TRAP

OBSERVE TN: 5 (10)
DEFEAT TN: 10 (Craft, Smithcraft, Stonecraft)
AVOID TN: 10 (Swiftness)
EFFECT: Triggering this trap causes a fine-mesh net to drop directly on the character who breaks its tripwire line. Unless avoided, the character who set off the trap and anyone within two yards of him is trapped in the net. (Each character in the area of effect makes an individual Swiftness test to avoid the net.) Characters caught in the net may take no actions aside from sawing their way out with a blade or tearing the net to pieces. Breaking the net requires a Strength test (TN 15). Sawing through requires 20 points of total damage. No attack roll is needed to inflict the damage, but Strength does not modify the damage roll. Characters

caught in the net suffer a –4 penalty to their Defence. A character who is not trapped can spend one action to break the net or cut it as described above.

Pit Trap

Observe TN: 10 (20)
Defeat TN: Naught
Avoid TN: 15 (Acrobatics)
Effect: A favourite trap amongst Orcs, this consists of a pit dug into the floor along a main passageway which is then covered with a grey cloth sprinkled with light dirt and debris. Any one who walks onto the pit immediately tumbles down into it. Most pits are no more than two or three metres deep. Refer to 'Falling' on page 245 of the core rulebook for damage sustained based on the depth of the pit.

Spear Trap

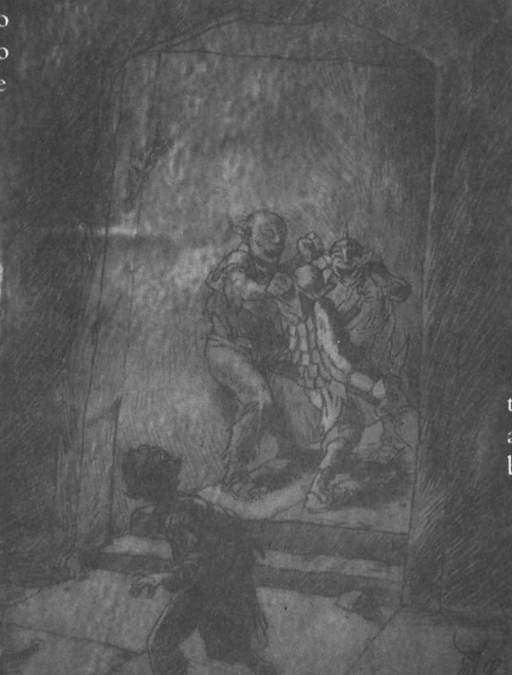
Observe TN: 15 (25)
Defeat TN: 15 (Craft, Smithcraft, Stonecraft)
Avoid TN: 10 (Swiftness)
Effect: A spear trap is designed to snap out and impale an intruder, attacking with the equivalent of Armed Combat 4. On a successful hit, the trap deals 2d6+3 damage. Spear traps only work once, but can be easily reset to affect the next unfortunate to encounter them.

Spiked Beam

Observe TN: 10 (15)
Defeat TN: 10 (Craft, Smithcraft, Stonecraft)
Avoid TN: 15 (Swiftness)
Effect: A spiked beam is a long, flexible piece of wood studded with sharpened stakes. When triggered it lashes out, raking its victim and anyone else in close proximity. (Anyone in arm's reach of the character who triggered the trap is affected, but receives a +5 bonus to the Swiftness test to avoid the beam.) The beam strikes its target with an equivalent of Armed Combat 5. On a hit, it inflicts 2d6+5 damage.

Proceed With Caution

While traps can add tension and danger to a scene, they can also feel arbitrary and force the characters to spend more time seeking out hidden dangers than proceeding with the story. In some ways, they run counter to the spirit of Middle-earth. Thus, you should introduce traps into Moria with care. All traps should have a logical reason for their existence. While Orcs are undeniably evil, they do not needlessly seed their homes with pitfalls. If they did, they would soon find themselves unable to move about without falling into their own snares. By the same token, traps of Dwarf-make should be confined to areas that once required the extra security provided.



Hazards

Over the many years since the Balrog drove the Dwarves from Moria, the Mines and upper halls have fallen into ruin. Weakened arches and ceilings threaten to drop tons of rock down upon travellers, cracked floors may give way beneath one's feet, and massive crevasses may force a wanderer to seek an easier path through the darkness. The sections that follow provide rules for how characters interact with these obstacles, and give advice on using them in your chronicles.

Hazards come in two varieties. In both cases, the advice given for traps applies equally to hazards: they should make battles and journeys more interesting, not drag the game into crawling minutiae.

The first are trap-like hazards, which function statistically just like traps do. A crumbling bridge that could topple into ruin as the characters cross it is an excellent example of a trap-like hazard. The only difference between a trap-like hazard and a trap is that the former represents the work of time and the latter the work of malice. Statistically, the observe TN typically represents the difficulty to realise the hazard is dangerous, rather than the difficulty to notice it at all. Further, trap-like hazards are rarely easy to disable; most have naught for their disable TN.

Other dangers are obstacles that pose no hidden threat but nevertheless present the characters with some challenge. A massive gap in the floor the characters need to somehow cross would fall under this category. Hazards that are obvious or cannot be treated like traps do not have game statistics. When employing them, Narrators should consider, in advance, tests appropriate to situations that might arise in connection with the hazard. For example, a great pit that must be crossed might be traversed using a rope and hook. The Narrator might decide that a TN 10 Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons test would be needed to set the rope, followed by a TN 5 Strength test to successfully cross it.

Sample Hazards

The following hazards serve as models for building your own and can be dropped directly into your game as they are presented.

The Crumbling Stair

A wide stairway built to cross a tall, open cavern suffered severe damage during the Balrog's first attacks on the Dwarves of Moria. Though the stair provides easy access from the Mines to Dwarrowdelf, the Orcs avoid it at all costs. However, many of the surviving records point to it as the surest path to the lower depths. It still stands, but will crumble to pieces if too much weight is placed upon it.

This is a trap-like hazard:

Observe TN: 5 (10)

Defeat TN: Naught

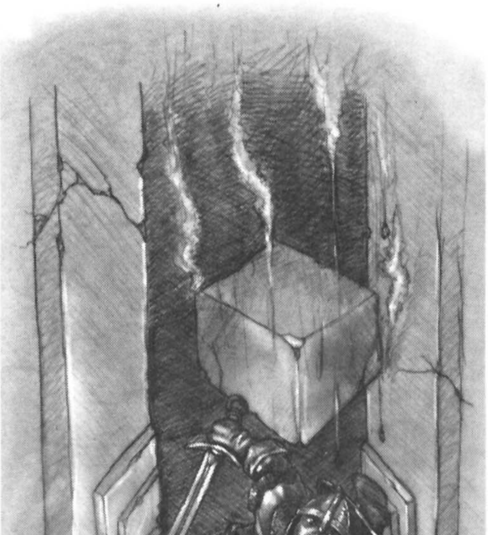
Avoid TN: Naught

Effect: As the characters attempt to cross the stair, it begins to sway precariously. Anyone standing upon it must make a Nimbleness test (TN 5) each round or fall 30 yards (see page 245 of the core rulebook). Furthermore, if three or more Medium-sized characters (a small character counts as one-half a Medium-sized character for these purposes) descend the stair at once, it begins to crumble. The Nimbleness test TN then increases by +5 each round until it is 30, at which point the stiar collapses completely and all characters still on it fall as described.

The Great Pit

This wide, deep shaft cuts through a chamber the characters must cross. It measures 10 yards at its widest and three yards at its narrowest. Large stone blocks and boulders litter the area, debris from the Balrog's attack that sundered this area. This obstacle works best if the characters must go somewhere quickly or are pursued by enemies.

There are several ways the characters can cross this gap. If they have a rope with a grappling hook or similar device, they can secure it on the opposite side with a TN 10 Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons test. Once the rope is in place, a character can make an Acrobatics test (TN 10) to swing across. Optionally, the end can be tied off and a less dramatic crossing attempted. This simply requires a TN 5 Nimbleness test. Crossing this way takes three rounds; each degree of success above or below marginal adds or subtracts one round from the crossing time.



Some of the larger stone blocks are wide enough to bridge the gap if one is carried to the pit's edge and pushed on to its side across the cleft. Moving the stone requires a Strength test (TN 25) that up to four characters may work on at once. It takes five minutes of work to push the stone into place.

Finally, it is possible to leap the chasm. This requires a TN 25 Jump test.

The River

In the depths of the Mines, many of the passages have flooded since the Dwarves were driven away. The passage the characters must cross was once a broad, shallow pit piled high with rock and debris from the Dwarves' mining activity. With the pit now flooded with water to a depth of 10 to 12 feet, the heroes must either swim or jump between the piles of stones to cross the room. Each time a character leaps onto one of the piles, roll 1d6. On a 1 or 2 (or 1 for Hobbits), the pile of rocks crumbles under the character's weight. He takes 1d6+2 damage and tumbles into the water. The water is very cold; a character soaked by it must make an immediate Stamina test to avoid losing a level of Weariness. Like all other water in Moria, this ought not be consumed. See page 18 for more information.

Use the standard rules for jumping (page 128 of the core rulebook) and swimming (page 137 of the core rulebook) as the characters make their way across this area. As with the Great Pit, this hazard is most dramatic if there is time pressure or additional danger.

Foul Air

Whether the result of poor circulation or the accumulation of vapors that are actually dangerous, this hazard can be combined with others to make certain areas positively perilous. Characters in areas of foul air must make Stamina tests every minute to avoid the loss of a Weariness level. Characters who pass out after losing all of their Weariness levels sustain 1d6 Wound Points each minute; harmful air can kill a hero exposed to it for too long.

MORIA DESIGN SYSTEM

Moria is a vast, uncharted place with plenty of room within its domains for you to chart out your own stories and adventures. Using the map tiles and template system described below, you can create your own sections of Moria or quickly produce a floor plan as the characters travel from one end of the mountain to the other.

OVERVIEW

Designing new sections of Moria involves the following steps. Each is described in detail below.

Choose the region of Moria—Dwarrowdelf, Western Deeps, or Mines—you will be creating or expanding.

Select one or more map tiles. Depending on how large an area you wish to design, you can use from one to all of the tiles. Link the tiles together, using the corridors that run to their edges or newly created new passages.

Pick any areas of significance to your adventure or chronicle and describe their contents in terms of inhabitants, traps, hazards, and story significance.

Use the template system to fill in the details for portions of the map that play a secondary role in the story, or that you simply would rather fill with random elements. This is a two-step process of first identifying each chamber's type and then determining its state.

Optionally, finish by seeding the map with foul creatures of Shadow.

CHOOSING THE REGION

The region of Moria you are working with will typically be obvious, because either it is where the heroes are currently located or you know it is where they are going.

USING THE TILES

Each tile is a generic floor plan that can be modified to fit Moria's different regions. Each tile is labelled with a letter and each chamber is marked with the tile's letter and a unique number. These are included so you can more easily refer between your notes and the tiles during play.

It may be more convenient at times to copy individual tiles onto graph paper. This is particularly useful if you decide you only want to use portions of a map and ignore some of the side passages and chambers included on it. When using the tiles, never be afraid to modify them to suit your needs. They are there to serve as tools, not canonical maps.

CREATING UNIQUE AREAS

After building your map, design any unique areas that tie into the adventure you have designed or encounters you wish to stage there. This is the most important step in the design process. While the template system can fill out an area, the flair and creativity you bring to it breathes life into it. Put another way, if the characters spend their time walking down an endless parade of featureless, identical corridors and chambers, the adventure quickly grows boring. Unique sites serve as landmarks that stand out in the players' minds. They break up the environment into manageable bits and help build anticipation as the characters travel.

When designing your own rooms and encounters, focus on a single trait or feature that differentiates it from others nearby. The template system is a good place to start. It includes a big list of features explorers can find in Moria. Pick out a few appropriate to the area you are designing, assign each to a single room, then set those fea-

tures aside as off-limits when randomly generating room contents. That way, you can ensure that the areas you have taken the time to build stand out from the rest of the area.

As one final option, the rooms detailed in Chapter Three—particular areas in the Seventh and Western Deeps—can be appropriated and reassigned as different portions of Moria. If you decide that the heroes in your chronicle will never venture to the Western Deep, you may as well use the areas described there in other regions of Moria.

TEMPLATES

While the tiles provide the basic skeleton of an area, the template description of each of Moria's regions fills in the descriptive details that make it come alive by applying the unique features of each of Moria's regions to the generic maps. For instance, while the passages in Dwarrowdelf are carefully crafted, the tunnels within the Mines are in most places rough-hewn and winding.

To use the template system, first read the general description of the region you are working with to get a feel for the area. Then, consult the region's Chamber Contents Table for each chamber on your map. This will tell you what sort of room each one is. Then, refer to the appropriate Chamber State Table. Either by rolling a die or choosing, determine the current state of the room: looted, scavenged, intact, ruined, hidden, or undisturbed.

The Chamber Contents Tables use your dice in a new way. Rather than summing two dice, you'll roll one die and treat that as a 'tens' digit, then roll a second die and treat that as a 'ones' digit. In this way, you can generate two-digit numbers such as 21, 34, and 56. This method of rolling dice is referred to as 'rolling d66.'

DWARROWDELF CHAMBER CONTENTS

DIE ROLL	RESULT
11–14	Armoury
15–23	Food Storage
24–31	Forge
32–33	Kitchen
34–54	Living Area
55–62	Public Hall
63–66	Water Storage

WESTERN DEEP CHAMBER CONTENTS

DIE ROLL	RESULT
11–16	Armoury
21–25	Food Storage
26–36	Forge
41–44	Kitchen
45–61	Living Area
62–63	Public Hall
64–66	Water Storage

THE MINES CHAMBER CONTENTS

DIE ROLL	RESULT
11–23	Armoury (tools)
24–34	Food Storage
35–44	Forge
45–52	Kitchen
52–61	Living Area
62–66	Water Storage

DWARROWDELF

When creating maps for Dwarrowdelf, it is best to first map one of that area's great halls, note corridors running from it, and then use the templates to populate the corridors and regions around it. Since the individual halls are unique features found in Moria, they are not included on the tiles. However, you can still use the tiles to map the passages and mansions built around the Dwarf-city's central regions.

The stonework within Dwarrowdelf is still in excellent shape. The passages are strongly built and free of the cracks and fissures that mark other areas within Moria.

Some of the passages that run between areas of Dwarrowdelf cut through large, open caverns in the earth. You can convert portions of the templates to balconies, arched staircases, and other passages over great pits by treating the filled-in space between corridors and rooms as a wide-open cavern. Each chamber is instead a platform, with corridors and stairs built atop stone arches that span the gaps in space.

WESTERN DEEP

The passages carved near the Hollin Gate are as wide and smooth as those of Dwarrowdelf, though this region lacks the Dwarf-city's great halls. The stonework here suffered much damage, leaving pits, fissures, and other hazards throughout the area.

For each room or stretch of corridor more than 10 yards long, roll 1d6. On a 1, a large crack or pit has opened up in the area. The rent is 1d6 yards wide and either blocks the corridor or opens a hole within the chamber.

Many of the passages and rooms in this region are choked with rubble. Be sure to emphasise the damage this place has sustained. Include details of the once-beautiful stonework and carvings that have crumbled into ruin. Describe the air as thick with dust, at times growing stifling and suffocating. Compared to Dwarrowdelf, few intact rooms survive here.

THE MINES

The endless warrens of mine shafts, tunnels, glory holes, and chambers make for difficult travel through the Mines. Refer to the rules on page 18 for fighting in confined spaces, as well as the rules on pages 16–7 about the emotional and physical toll of travelling within Moria. Those rules apply directly to characters who journey into the Mines.

All of the passages in the Mines are rough and twisted. When using the tiles, convert long, straight corridors into winding passages that start and end at the points on the tiles but take a circuitous route between them. Perfectly formed chambers should be replaced with rough-hewn openings that more closely resemble widened sections of mine shafts rather than properly crafted rooms.

In addition, many of the mine areas are blocked by fissures or flooded. There is a 1 in 6 chance that a given tunnel is blocked by a crack in the floor or pool of water 1d6 yards wide.

The lowest mine levels open up to great caverns with bodies of water that range from small pools to subterranean lakes. These areas should be mapped out ahead of time. Use the tiles to build paths to and from these regions and to populate the tunnels that run from those areas.

When randomly stocking chambers within the Mines, assign uses to only a quarter or half of the rooms present on the map. Many of the areas within the Mines were carved from the rock in the course of mining operations, rather than delved to serve a specific use or purpose.

CHAMBER STATE TABLES

Each type of room that can be generated from the Chamber Contents Tables is described in six different versions below. Each version describes a general state of repair the room may be found in according to how the Orcs have treated it over the years.

When rolling or assigning the current state of the rooms in an area, apply common sense. If a few rooms in one area are intact and used by the Orcs, those chambers should be located near each other. Generally speaking, rooms tend to reflect the condition of those around them. If one room is intact, the others around it probably are too.

Remember that your own creativity and judgement are necessary to truly breathe life into this system. The room descriptions are a starting point to spark your imagination. If you simply recycle them word for word each time you use a specific room type, your adventures will be stale. Try to inject at least one unique or noteworthy trait into each room.

ARMOURY

The Dwarves produced many fine suits of armour, keen weapons, and stout shields. This room once stored such equipment.

1. LOOTED: The armoury has been thoroughly stripped of all items of value. It holds nothing more than dust, a few smashed and crumbling stone weapon racks, and scattered pieces of shattered weapons, rent armour, and other debris.

2. SCAVENGED: The Orcs picked through the weapons and armour here, carrying off the choice bits but leaving a few items behind: 1d6–2 suits of scale mail, 1d6 daggers, and 1d6–3 battle axes are scattered on the floor.

3. INTACT: After carrying off the Dwarf-items, the Orcs used this place for their own purposes. Orc-daggers and swords (2d6 each) hang from stone pegs on the wall, while 2d6 suits of leather armour and 1d6 sets of Orc-chainmail are stacked in a corner. On a 1d6 roll of 4 or higher, 1d6 Orc-warriors are on guard duty here.

4. RUINED: This place may have once held great treasure, but its ceiling collapsed many years ago. The area is filled with broken stones, rubble, and other debris.

5. HIDDEN ROOM: This room appears to have been thoroughly looted. Its walls are stripped bare, and little aside from shattered remnants of weapons, scraps of chainmail, and dust lie here. However, a Dwarf-door set into one of the walls hides a long-forgotten cache that contains a suit of Dwarf-chainmail and a finely crafted mattock.

6. UNDISTURBED: The armoury is protected by a Dwarf-door that has thus far prevented the Orcs from penetrating its defences. Within are 2d6 suits of Dwarf-chainmail, 1d6 small shields, and 3d6 weapons. Half the weapons are battle axes, and the remainder are evenly divided between great axes, daggers, mattocks, hammers, and longswords.

FOOD STORAGE

The Dwarves of Moria were keenly aware of their shortcomings in terms of food production. Many of their largest chambers were given over to food storage. Great bales of grain, casks of wine, kegs of beer, and other foodstuffs were kept here.

1. LOOTED: Aside from a few mouldering piles of grain in the corners, this room has long since been stripped bare. What food was left behind has rotted away.

2. SCAVENGED: The Orcs and other creatures picked at the food stored here but never fully stripped it. A pile of sacks filled with grain occupies half the room. Many of these have burst open, and the grain has rotted away or supports a giant mould colony. A few casks of alcohol are set in the corner, their contents spoiled.

3. INTACT: The Orcs use this area for their own purposes. The food kept here was either consumed or carried off elsewhere. Now, dead rats and other freshly killed vermin hang from hooks on the ceiling. The floor is stained with blood, and a small pile of bones sits in a corner. On a 1d6 roll of 1 or 2, 1d6 kegs of ale are also kept here. On a 1d6 roll of 1, 1d6 Orcs are here preparing a meal or dropping off supplies.

4. RUINED: The stench of rot is overpowering. The doors to this room are kept barred shut from the outside. (If no doors are indicated on the tile, add them.) Roll 1d6 before the door to this room is opened. On a 1, when the doors are opened each character within five yards of the room's entrance must make a Stamina test (TN 10) or suffer a –1 penalty to all actions for 2d6 minutes as the stench overpowers and nauseates those exposed to it. Otherwise, this room is piled high with ancient supplies long since gone bad.

5. HIDDEN ROOM: This chamber resembles a scavenged room, but stored amongst the goods here are several sealed jars containing still-usable supplies. If the characters spend an hour searching the area and make a successful Search test (TN 15) they discover something useful, such as healing herbs, preserved Dwarf-delicacies, or something similar.

6. UNDISTURBED: By luck or design, the Orcs have not yet despoiled this chamber. While the sacks of grain and kegs of ale found here have long since turned bad, 1d6 sealed urns each contain enough preserved food to feed one person for a week.

FORGE

The Dwarves kept many forges throughout Moria's levels. Some Dwarves kept personal forges; others worked in great halls with fellow craftsmen. In the Mines, forges were used to make and repair picks, mine carts, and other tools.

1. Looted: The Orcs carried off the tools and other useful items kept here for their own uses. The chamber stands empty save a furnace and the hole carved in the ceiling to disperse smoke.

2. Scavenged: This chamber has been cleared of most smaller tools, but the anvil, fire pit, and a few of the workbenches remain. With a day of work, this place could be restored to normal.

3. Intact: The Orcs make use of this chamber, forging weapons and armour using ore from the Mines. Currently, 2d6 Orcs work here. All the tools necessary for metalworking can be found here, and while the anvil and forge have been poorly maintained, they are still in working order.

4. Ruined: Perhaps in search of a hidden treasure, the Orcs have smashed the walls and thoroughly ransacked this room. The anvil has been carted away, numerous holes carved with picks and shovels mar the walls, and the fireplace has been smashed and clogged with debris. Dust has settled thickly on the floor and walls.

5. Hidden Room: This private forge is concealed with Dwarf-doors. At one time, a prosperous Dwarf or highly skilled craftsman worked here to produce some of the most valuable items ever crafted by the Dwarves of Moria. The forge and anvil are still in working shape. Any Craft tests that involve their use gain a +2 test bonus due to the high quality of the tools here.

6. Undisturbed: For years, this forge has accumulated dust and debris. The tools kept here—hammer, tongs, and other implements—still hang from hooks beneath a thick layer of dust and dirt. If the characters spend one hour attempting a Search test (TN 20), they discover a small ingot of *mithril* hidden within a coal bin set next to the forge here.

Kitchen

When the Dwarves of Moria gathered to work in the Mines or stood guard over watch posts, they relied on large, communal kitchens to provide their meals. Even many of the noblest Dwarf-families chose to eat with their relatives in central halls most of the time, reserving their private dining

halls for special occasions or entertaining guests.

1. Looted: What was once a long, wooden dining table is now a splinted pile of rotting timbers scattered throughout the room. The fireplace is filled with stones and debris, and a crumpled cooking pot has been kicked into one corner.

2. Scavenged: The Orcs have dragged off the tables, chairs, and utensils once kept here, leaving behind nothing of use. The fireplace built here for cooking is dusty and choked with cobwebs and dirt.

3. Intact: The Orcs use this place as a meeting hall and feasting chamber. A fire burns in the hearth. The tables and chairs are battered and bloodstained but mostly intact. Rat-meat and other foodstuffs hang from crude hooks wedged into cracks in the walls near the fire. Between 1d6 and 4d6 Orcs occupy this room at any given time, depending on how close it is to a mealtime when the characters approach.

4. Ruined: Bats, rats, or some other vermin have taken to using this place as a nest. The wooden furniture has either been smashed by the Orcs or gnawed to ruin by its current inhabitants. Droppings are thick on the floor, and small creatures skitter away if the characters shine a torch, lantern, or other light source into the room.

5. Hidden Room: Once used to host delicate negotiations or private parties, this dining chamber is concealed behind a series of Dwarf-doors that once impressed visitors but now guard it from the Orcs' depredations. The chamber within is decorated with a chandelier appointed in crystal and silver. The long dinner table was carved from the rock when this room was first wrought from the earth, as were the padded, stone chairs surrounding it. Bas-relief carvings of Dwarf-history decorate the walls. The fireplace here is filled with dust and debris, and the choice food bits kept here have long since rotted away.

6. Undisturbed: The long dining table here is still intact, with short stone benches arranged along its sides. Plates and utensils are stacked along a stone counter near a fireplace covered with dust and cobwebs. The food kept here has long since rotted away, but the remaining items are in good condition. If the characters spend a half-hour on a Search test (TN 15), they discover a set of eight matching silver forks and spoons.

LIVING AREA

This area served as a barracks, a mansion for a Dwarf-family, or a hostel for workers who toiled in the Mines. When assigning this category to a room on the tiles, you should include several surrounding rooms with it if you want to recreate an entire Dwarf-mansion.

1. Looted: This entire area is littered with shattered furniture, rock splinters from smashed stone items, and massive holes punched into the walls by eager Orcs seeking to scavenge anything of value from this area. The floor is blackened from smoke, as in many areas the Orcs lit bonfires from the furnishings, bedding, and other items taken from these quarters.

2. Scavenged: The beds here have been hacked open, their innards spread throughout the room, but most of the furniture is intact. In a few areas, the Orcs opened holes in the walls with picks and shovels in search of hidden caches. Some of these openings lead to looted treasure vaults, while others stop a few feet into the wall.

3. Intact: Though these quarters show signs of disturbance, the Orcs have kept them mostly intact for their own uses. The beds are now piles of filth, and bones, broken weapons, and scraps of armour litter the floor. At any given time, 2d6 Orcs are here sleeping, arguing, or drinking.

4. Ruined: A great conflagration spread through here, igniting wooden and cloth materials and melting what few metal items the Orcs left behind. The floor is covered with ashes and cinder, and the ceiling and walls are a grimy black. Nothing of value survived the fire.

5. Hidden Room: While the rest of this Dwarf-mansion may have been destroyed in a fire or other disturbance, this chamber has survived intact. Used as a private chamber or treasure vault, most items of value kept here were carried off when the Dwarves abandoned Moria many years ago. However, a locked chest—Craft: Locksmith or similar skill TN 15 to open—holds several items left behind in the rush to flee. The chest contains two silver candlesticks, a mouldering tablecloth, and a wooden box holding a golden necklace set with a ruby.

6. Undisturbed: After a brief search through this area, the Orcs have yet to return to fully pillage it. Much of the furniture stands intact, and but for the thick layer of dust these chambers do not seem as if it has been years since anyone has dwelled here. Chairs are set before a fireplace, steins are arranged on a table, and the sheets on a bed are pulled back as if someone recently woke up. Any items of obvious value were either carried off by the Dwarves or looted by the Orcs.

PUBLIC HALL

The Dwarves used these chambers to hold meetings, celebrations, and other events that attracted many Dwarves. During times of crises or celebration, the Dwarves took to the public halls to debate, dance, or sing, as the occasion demanded. Public halls were decorated with statues, murals, and other artistic expressions that illustrated Moria's past and the great accomplishments of the Dwarves.

1. Looted: Any statues here have been defaced, their heads hewn from their stony shoulders, their faces marred with sword or axe strokes, and their arms chopped from their bodies. The murals are covered in graffiti or gouged from the walls with picks and mattocks. Dirt and shattered stones cover the floor.

2. SCAVENGED: The statues and murals in this chamber have been defaced, but not with the same vigour as a fully looted room. The statues show the marks of a few axe or sword hacks but are otherwise intact. The walls have been tunnelled into at a few places the Orcs suspected they could find a treasure vault, but they are otherwise intact.

3. INTACT: The Orcs have converted the hall to their use. The statuary has been toppled over and replaced with columns adorned with weapons, armour, and other trinkets taken from the Orcs' foes. The walls are lined with the skulls of their fallen enemies, and the floor is sticky from spilled Orc-draught from their rowdy celebrations.

4. RUINED: Whether due to the settling of the earth or the Balrog's actions, this room's ceiling has partially collapsed. This place is filled with dirt, stone blocks, and other debris that the characters must climb over to proceed through it.

5. HIDDEN ROOM: A private hall meant for the most influential and successful Dwarves, this room is accessible only by Dwarf-doors and features secret passages that lead to other halls and chambers throughout Moria. During times of crisis, the Dwarves met here to discuss battle plans or debate their course of action. In the privacy of this chamber, they could discuss matters openly without fear of spreading panic or allowing word of their meetings to spread too quickly. The Dwarves also preferred to use these chambers when meeting with important dignitaries from other lands. This room is plainly appointed, featuring chairs sized for Dwarves, Men, and Elves, murals depicting the glory of the Dwarves, and a single stone desk where a scribe would transcribe the discussion or complete a written contract.

6. UNDISTURBED: The Orcs have not yet defiled this place, leaving it relatively intact. Statues of great heroes and leaders of Moria line the walls here, while bas-relief carvings of wondrous beauty cover the still-exposed areas. By the light of a torch, the shadows cast on the carvings make them seem alive. At first glance, the characters may think they have entered a room bustling with Dwarves.

WATER STORAGE

Keeping enough water on hand for drinking, washing, and other purposes was a critical issue within Moria. Work teams pulled carts laden with barrels from the deepest areas of the Mines to Moria's upper levels. Each morning, every household in Moria rolled an empty barrel to the nearest water storage chamber and filled up their daily ration.

1. LOOTED: In their eagerness to uncover hidden treasures, the Orcs systematically smashed the barrels, carts, and kegs kept in this chamber. The floor is littered with wooden scraps piled almost to a Man's knee.

2. SCAVENGED: The Orcs searched through this chamber but did not smash the water barrels and carts here, though the water has long since fouled. A well carved in one of the room's corners drops down into darkness.

3. INTACT: The Orcs use this chamber for their own supplies. As creatures of Shadow they can drink Moria's fouled water without fear of sickness. A few barrels filled with water are clustered near the door, along with a wooden cart used to carry supplies up from the Mines. On a 1d6 roll of 1, 1d6 Orcs are here filling their supplies.

4. RUINED: Once a great well dominated this room, but the floor collapsed into it, leaving the entire chamber little more than a gigantic hole. In the Mines, this room opens into a great pit. On the upper levels, the floor has collapsed into a sinkhole.

5. HIDDEN ROOM: This emergency supply of water is accessible only through a Dwarf-door. Within, sealed casks hold water that has remained potable despite the many years since it was placed here. Depending on the size of this chamber, it could hold enough water to supply the characters for a week—or an entire Dwarf-expedition for a month.

6. UNDISTURBED: While this room is still in order, its contents have long since spoiled. Barrels and kegs filled with water are neatly stacked here along with two wooden carts and several buckets. The water is all fouled. Though it looks clean, characters drinking it are affected as per water ingested elsewhere in Moria.

INHABITANTS

Normally when the characters travel through Moria, you can use the Peril system to determine the creatures they encounter. But sometimes you may want to assign creatures to a specific area and leave the characters to stumble into them or avoid them based on their decisions or luck. The easiest way to assign creatures to a region is to select the Intact versions of the chambers in the area. All of these room descriptions include notes on how many Orcs occupy them. Otherwise, to determine how many creatures occupy a given tile, divide the region's Peril TN by five and round down. On a 1d6 roll equal to that number or lower, pick an encounter from the Peril system and place it somewhere on the map. You can roll a number of times for each tile equal to the region's Peril TN divided by five, rounded down.

Chapter Five

CREATURES OF MORIA

> *'There are older and fouler things than Orcs in the deep places of the world.'*
> — *Gandalf, The Fellowship of the Ring*

Many horrors stalk Moria's halls. Orcs are the most numerous, but Cave-trolls are not uncommon and other strange creatures also prowl its depths. This chapter describes the many foul creatures that can be found in Moria, from Durin's Bane to the lowliest vermin.

Some of the statistics possessed by the creatures in this chapter—TN Equivalent, for example—may be new to you. Others—such as Special Abilities—are used in a slightly different way than in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* core rulebook. For more information, refer to *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, which presents many new rules about how creatures work in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*.

MORIA-ORCS

As described in *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, the Orc-race is composed of a number of different breeds. For the most part, the Orcs found within Moria belong to the Moria-breed, the base statistics of which are given below. While other Orc-breeds can certainly be found within the vastness of Moria, they are a small minority.

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 5 (±0), Nimbleness 7 (±0), Perception 9 (+1), Strength 8 (+1)*, Vitality 8 (+1)*, Wits 5 (±0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1*, Swiftness +1, Willpower ±0, Wisdom +1

DEFENCE: 10

Movement Rate: 6
Orders: Barbarian
Order Abilities: Hard March: Underground
Skills: Armed Combat: Blades (Short Sword) +4, Intimidate (Fear) +2, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Orkish (Moria-dialect) +4, Lore: Group (Orcs) +3, Lore: Realm (Moria) +3, Observe (Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +1, Run +3, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Survival (Underground) +3, Track (Orcs) +1
Edges: Keen-nosed, Night-eyed 2
Flaws: Craven, Hatred (Dwarves, Elves)
Special Abilities: Armour (tough skin, 1), Curse of Daylight, Natural Weapon (claws, 1 point)
Size: Medium (5 Wound Levels)
Health: 9
Gear: Short sword, shortbow, Orc-chainmail, small shield
TN Equivalent: 5 (band of four)

Unique Special Abilities

Curse of Daylight: Orcs of most breeds suffer a –4 test modifier to all tests while in sunlight, but Moria-orcs suffer an ever worse penalty of –6. When they travel above ground (see 'Travelling' on page 251 of the core rulebook) Moria-orcs suffer 'night-time' modifiers during the day, but no modifiers at night.

Description

Orcs vary wildly in appearance, and Moria-orcs are no exception. While differences within a given Orc-band are typically minor, appearance varies wildly from tribe to tribe. The following paragraphs suggest elements that can easily be varied to create fresh groups of Moria-orcs.

Tattoos, War Paint, and Equipment: Some bands of Orcs adorn themselves with patterns of war paint or tattoos as a sign of their allegiance and skill. Others favour unusual weapons, such as axes or maces, rather than the short swords preferred by most Moria-orcs due to the cramped underground quarters of Moria. A group of Orcs may bear a symbol on their shields and armour, such as the eye of Sauron, a white skull, or crossed swords.

Physical Traits: Some Orcs have such long arms their knuckles drag along the ground as they move, while others have short, bowed legs that give them a distinctive waddle as they run. The eyes of some Orcs have a feral nature, glowing in the dark with a dull, green light. Some flash red with anger as the Orcs charge into battle.

Tactics: Some bands of Orcs prefer reckless, headlong assaults against their enemies, while others prefer ambushes. One clan may rely on ranged attacks, while another uses hit-and-run tactics.

Methods of Communication: While most speak the same dialect of Orkish (see below), different bands of Moria-orcs often communicate with members of their tribe—or members of nearby tribes—in unusual ways. Drum-beats are one common method, though the cadences and their meanings vary from band to band. Other groups of Orcs leave crude pictographs drawn in charcoal, chalk, or blood on cavern walls. One additional, and particularly gruesome, method of communication involves the mangling and placing of the carcasses of rats and other vermin in certain ways in order to convey simple messages, such as 'stay away,' 'danger,' and 'good food ahead.'

Society

While Moria-orcs as a whole represent a single breed, they are divided into many small, fractious clans, tribes, and bands. The 'organisation' of such social groupings within Moria is incomprehensible to non-Orcs. The fact to understand is that different bands of Orcs sometimes co-operate and sometimes fight, in an ever-shifting pattern of alliances and hostilities that relate, ultimately, to their relationship with the Balrog.

Orc-tribes within Moria adopt names and symbols to set themselves apart from the others, though all of the bands throughout Moria—with a few exceptions representing recent arrivals—speak the same dialect of the Orkish language.

Within a given tribe, the most powerful Orc dominates the others. Sub-commanders are sometimes appointed to lead smaller divisions within the group, but their status is precarious, as most Orc-captains are highly capricious. As a result of their general fear of the powerful, few Orcs attempt to overthrow an incumbent leader. Durin's Bane rarely takes any interest at all in the organisation of Orcs, so the influence of the Balrog is almost never a factor in the way Orcs relate to each other.

The Orcs of Moria divide their time more or less equally between three pursuits: procuring food and supplies, looting areas of Moria which have not been fully depleted, and warring against other bands of Orcs. While the first of those three is a practical matter of the band's survival, the looting and warring behaviour is largely dedicated to appeasing the Balrog and achieving greater status within the ever-changing hierarchy of Moria.

Orc Templates

Another simple way to differentiate Orcs, particularly leaders, is to grant them advancements. Because Moria-orcs are members of the barbarian order, they follow the same system for advancements that player characters do.

The following 'packages' are meant for quick application to the basic

ORC-HORDES

Characters adventuring in Moria may eventually face very large groups of Orc-opponents. These optional rules for Orc-hordes make single, weak Orcs much easier to defeat with one or two sword strokes. The Orcs must rely on great numbers rather than on their individual skills to defeat the characters. These rules are best used when you want to create encounters that involve Orc enemies numbering more than two dozen or so. In smaller encounters, play is best served by the normal combat rules.

The optional rules for Orc-hordes are as follows:

Orcs that do not have any advancements receive only one action per round.

Individual Orcs without any advancements are one-success opponents, according to the rules under 'Combat Pacing' on page 270 of the core rulebook.

Instead of attacking, any Orc may grant a +1 test bonus to a fellow Orc who attacks a hero that the first Orc could also attack with a hand weapon. Thus, a large number of Orcs who surround a hero could each grant a (cumulative) +1 bonus to one of their comrades. The only limit lies in the number of Orcs who can surround a given target. This limit is six for Medium targets and four for Small targets.

Moria-orc statistic block. Each package consists of the number of advancements the package represents, a series of changes to be made to the statistic block, and the equipment upgrades typically possessed by those to whom the package has been applied.

APOTHECARY

ADVANCEMENTS: 3

STATISTICS: +1 rank Lore: Realm (Moria), +2 ranks Healing, additional order ability Brew Poison, Brew Poison improvement (any onset time), Brew Poison improvement (brew damaging poisons)

EQUIPMENT: Store of herbal ingredients

ARCHER

ADVANCEMENTS: 1

STATISTICS: +2 ranks of Ranged Combat, additional Ranged Combat specialty (longbow), additional edge Accurate: Longbow

EQUIPMENT: Longbow

CAPTAIN

ADVANCEMENTS: 8

STATISTICS: +5 ranks of Armed Combat, +2 ranks of Intimidate, +2 ranks Lore: Realm (Moria), +1 rank Observe, +2 ranks Ranged Combat, +2 Courage, +3 Health, additional edge Hardy, additional order ability Champion

EQUIPMENT: Orc-chainmail hauberk, large shield

CHAMPION

ADVANCEMENTS: 2

STATISTICS: +4 ranks of Armed Combat, +1 rank Intimidate, +1 Courage, additional edge Hardy

EQUIPMENT: Orc-chainmail hauberk, large shield

SCOUT

ADVANCEMENTS: 3

STATISTICS: +5 ranks of Track, +3 ranks of Observe, +3 ranks Lore: Realm (Moria), additional Observe specialty (Listen), additional order ability Walk Without Trace: Underground

EQUIPMENT: As normal

SORCERER

ADVANCEMENTS: 7

STATISTICS: additional order Magician, additional order ability Spellcasting (*Beast Summoning, Bladeshattering, Blast of Sorcery, Enslave Beast*), Spellcasting improvement (*Display of Power, Evoke Fear, Exclusion*), +2 ranks Ranged Combat, additional Ranged Combat specialty (*Blast of Sorcery*), +2 ranks Intimidate, +2 ranks Lore: Realm (Moria), +3 Wits

EQUIPMENT: Orc-sorcerers are typically unarmored and do not carry shields, but otherwise carry the armaments typical to Orcs.

TROLL-HERD

ADVANCEMENTS: 2

STATISTICS: +2 ranks Armed Combat: Whip, +4 ranks Craft: Troll-herd, +2 ranks Lore: Race (Trolls)

EQUIPMENT: Whip

Durin's Bane, the Balrog of Moria

Attributes: Bearing 26 (+10)*, Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 14 (+4), Strength 22 (+8)*, Vitality 23 (+8), Wits 16 (+5)
Reactions: Stamina +8, Swiftness +3, Willpower +10*, Wisdom +10
Defence: 12
Movement Rate: 24
Orders: Warrior, captain
Order Abilities: Leadership, Swift Strike, Tactics, Warrior-born
Skills: Armed Combat: Blade (Sword of Flame) +14, Armed Combat: Whip (Whip of Flame) +14, Intimidate (Fear) +22, Invulnerable (fire), Observe (Spot) +8, Language: Black Speech +6
Flaws: Fealty (to Morgoth), Hatred (wizards), Proud
Special Abilities: Armour (5, rocky skin), Cloaked in Darkness, Flight, Heart of Fire, Power Over Magic, Terror, Weapons of Flame
Size: Mammoth (7 Wound Levels, 3 Healthy)
Health: 31
Courage: 6
Renown: 10
TN Equivalent: 30

Unique Special Abilities

Cloaked in Darkness: Deep shadow surrounds the Balrog like a cloak of darkness. All non-magical light within 30 feet of it is extinguished or dimmed, and anyone caught within this darkness suffers a –5 test result penalty to all physical tests.

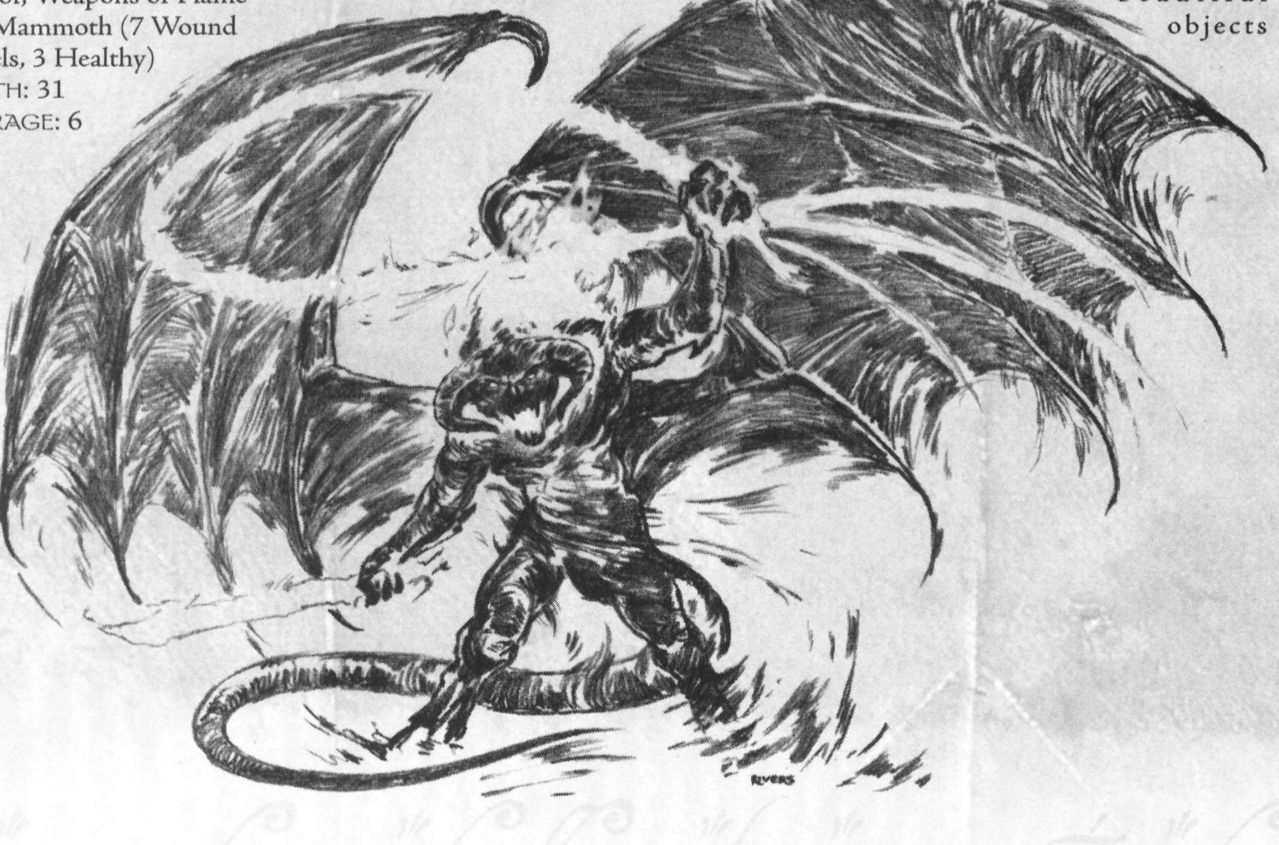
Heart of Fire: At the Balrog's heart is a fell power of fire, and living flame courses over every surface of its body. It may *Kindle Fire* (as the spell) with only a touch, and any who touch or grapple with a Balrog suffer 1d6 damage every round from its unholy flames.

Power Over Magic: The Balrog can spend one action to cast a counter-spell to any spell. It need not make a Stamina test to use this power, and it gains a +3 test modifier if the spell involves fire or shadow. See page 170 of the core rulebook for more information on counter-spells.

Weapons of Flame: Durin's Bane carries two weapons. The first is an enormous sword—far too big for any Man to wield—that does 4d6 damage. The second is a many-thonged whip that does 2d6+3 damage, even to armoured foes. On a superior success or better with the whip, the Balrog may entangle a foe instead of doing damage. Anyone so entangled must make a TN 15 Strength test to escape. Additionally, each of these weapons burns with magical flame—the equivalent of the spell *Kindle Fire*—that may set other flammable items struck by them on fire.

Description

The Balrog, Durin's Bane, rules Moria through the threat of its tremendous power. The Orcs and Trolls that inhabit Moria's Mines and upper levels pay it tribute, usually in the form of beautiful objects



looted from Dwarf-tombs or storerooms found in Dwarrowdelf. Yet the Balrog has little use for these trinkets; this spirit of raw destruction delights in smashing works crafted by the Free Peoples. Its lair is littered with the burnt and melted remains of wondrous treasures now forever lost to Middle-earth. In fact, much of the other damage inflicted upon Moria came as a result of this creature's love of ruin. In the late Third Age, however, the Balrog rarely ventures far from its lair unless it must deal with a powerful intruder.

The might of Durin's Bane in some ways rivals that of Sauron, and it is by no means a vassal of Mordor. Instead, an uneasy truce exists between the two camps. For more information see page 11.

CAVE-TROLLS OF MORIA

Attributes: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 5 (±0), Perception 6 (±0), Strength 16 (+5)*, Vitality 16 (+5)*, Wits 3 (–1)
Reactions: Stamina +7*, Swiftness ±0, Willpower ±0, Wisdom ±0
Defence: 10
Movement Rate: 24
Order: Warrior
Order Abilities: Favoured Weapon (Troll-mace)
Skills: Armed Combat: Clubs (Troll-mace) +8, Intimidate (Power) +6, Language: Black Speech +1, Language: Westron +1, Observe (Smell) +2, Unarmed Combat: Brawling +8, Survival (Caves) +4, Track (Scent) +1
Special Abilities: Armour (4), Flailing Chain, Vulnerability (sunlight, turn permanently to stone)
Edges: Hammerhand, Hardy, Night-eyed 2
Flaws: Battle Fury 2, Weak-willed
Size: Mammoth (7 Wound Levels, 3 Healthy)
Health: 21
TN Equivalent: 10

SPECIAL ABILITIES

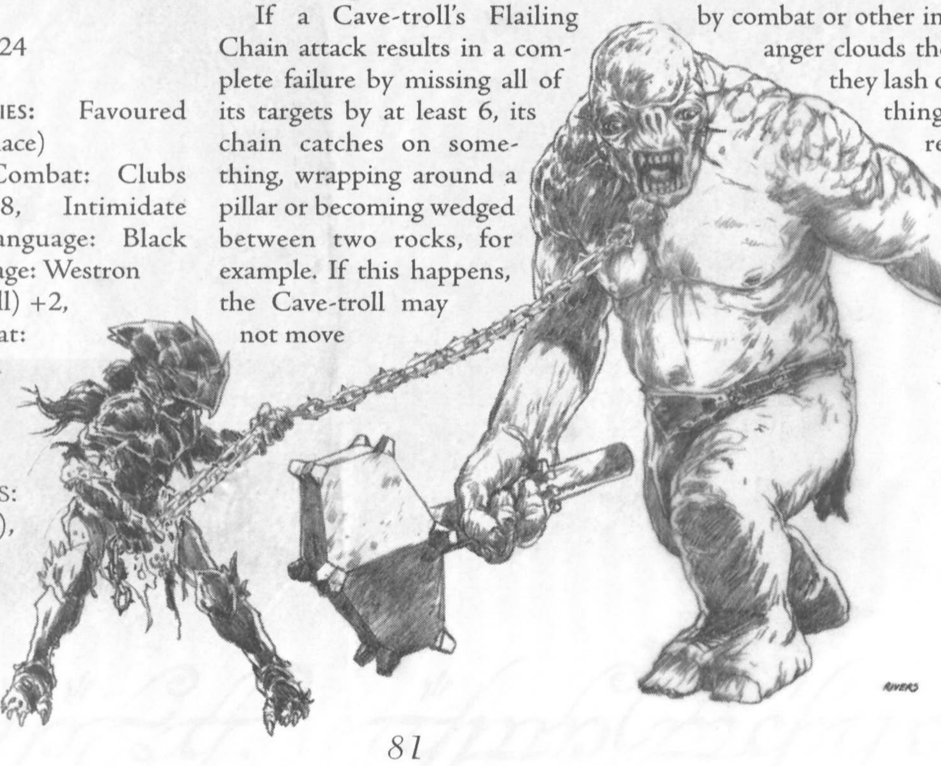
Flailing Chain: When the Orcs of Moria capture a Cave-troll, they normally lead it along by a thick, heavy chain attached to an iron collar around its neck. Cave-trolls learn to use this chain as a weapon, as even in battle the Orcs leave it in place. By whipping its chain around like a flail, a Cave-troll can lash at its opponents. Using the chain in this manner takes two actions, but the troll may attack up to 1d6 opponents within five yards each time it strikes. Roll to determine the number of opponents the troll may hit, then make one attack roll and compare the results to each target's Defence. This attack may not be parried, but it may be dodged. The chain inflicts 2d6 damage plus the Cave-troll's Strength modifier.

If a Cave-troll's Flailing Chain attack results in a complete failure by missing all of its targets by at least 6, its chain catches on something, wrapping around a pillar or becoming wedged between two rocks, for example. If this happens, the Cave-troll may not move more than one yard in any direction until it snaps the chain with a successful Strength test (TN 12).

DESCRIPTION

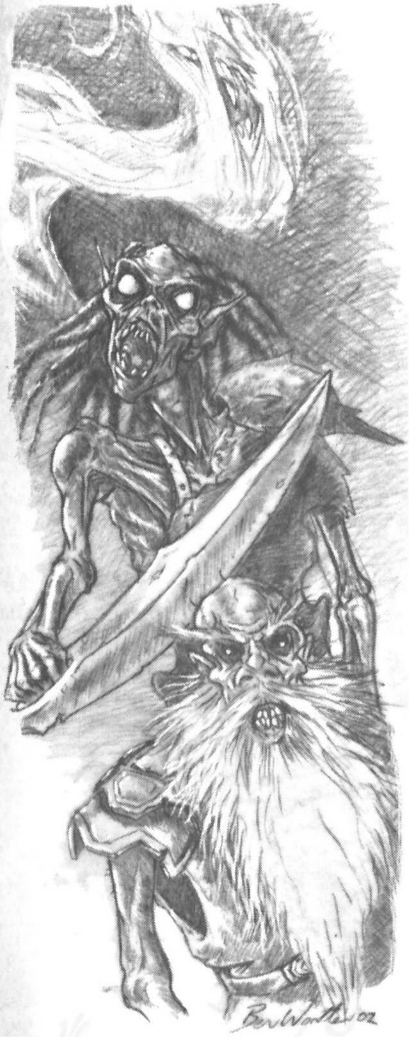
The Cave-trolls of Moria are taller and stronger than most other trolls. They have dark-grey, stony skin that can turn aside arrows and sword blows. Their tiny, beady eyes and flattened snouts are set into broad, oval faces. They walk hunched forward, frequently using their long, powerful arms to balance their short, squat legs.

The Orcs use Cave-trolls as slave labour and shock troops, leading them into battle with long chains fastened to collars around their necks. A Cave-troll's tremendous strength allows it to smash through its enemies with ease, yet its stupidity can make it dangerous to its keepers, as well. The Orcs normally keep their Cave-troll slaves locked in stone chambers or iron cages reserved for the purpose until they are needed to work in the Mines or attack intruders. While Cave-trolls are vicious creatures, their inborn connection to the Shadow normally makes them docile servants of their Orc-masters. When enraged by combat or other injury, however, anger clouds their minds and they lash out at all living things. For this reason, Orcs take care to watch over their



Cave-troll workers. Sane Orcs pull back from battle after sending Cave-trolls into the fray.

The tight confines of Moria—combined with a Cave-troll's stooped posture and slow, lumbering gait—makes it easy for an opponent to leap upon a Cave-troll's broad back and attack with impunity. Any hero who stands above the Troll can leap onto its back with a successful Acrobatics test opposed by the Troll's Swiftness. Any attacks the hero makes from this vantage point gain a +4 bonus to hit and deal an additional 1d6 damage. Once per round, as a free action, the Troll can attempt to shake a character off with a Strength test opposed by the character's Acrobatics test. No more than two small characters or one medium one may be on a Cave-troll's back at once.



CAVE-WRAITHS

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2), Nimbleness 7 (+0), Perception 7 (+0), Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 10 (+2)
REACTIONS: Stamina +5, Swiftness +4, Willpower +4, Wisdom +3
DEFENCE: 10
MOVEMENT RATE: 6
SKILLS: Intimidate (Fear) +5, Observe (Spot) +6, Stealth (Hide) +8

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Icy Touch, Incorporeal, Terror, Vulnerability (sunlight, immediate destruction)

SIZE: Medium (5 Wound Levels)
HEALTH: 12
TN EQUIVALENT: 10

UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

ICY TOUCH: A Cave-wraith's chill and deadly touch causes its victim to lose 2 points of Strength and Vitality each round. When either attribute reaches 0, the victim falls unconscious for 2d6x10 minutes. Lost points are regained at the rate of 1 in each attribute per 10 minutes—or in full when the victim awakens or upon the application of a *Healing-spell*.

DESCRIPTION

Cave-wraiths are the restless souls of Orcs who, for some reason, were possessed of such malice in life that they lingered in death, insubstantial but full of evil intent. Cave-wraiths are not common in Moria, but can potentially be found anywhere in its depths.

Cave-wraiths hate all life and attack Man, Orc, Elf, and Troll with equal rage. Some have specific, evil goals which went unfulfilled in life. Such creatures are single-minded in their attempts to fulfil these—typically impossible—ends.

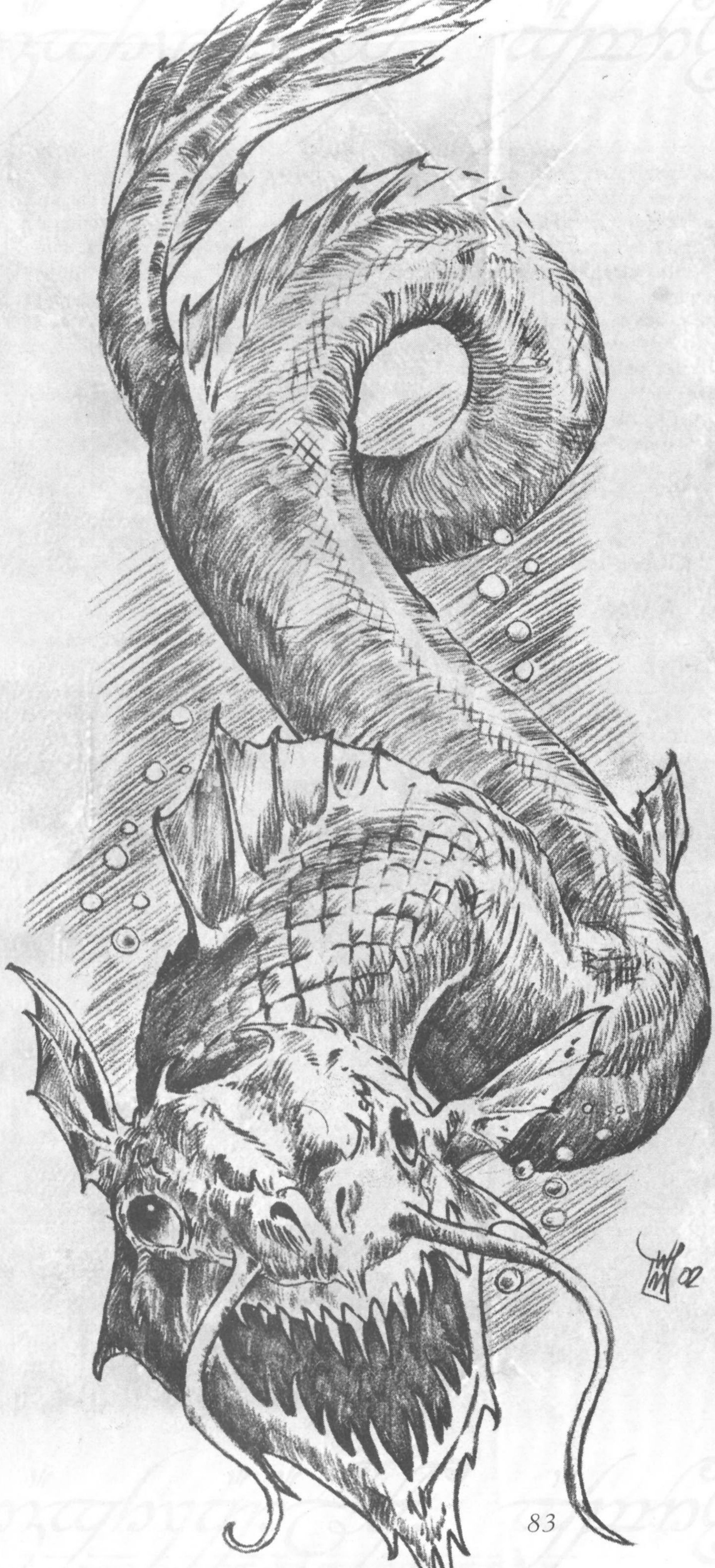
Cave-wraiths appear as gaunt Orcs with pale, white flesh that hangs from their body in limp folds, as if their skin were a coat several sizes too big for their bones. They often wear armour and carry arms, though such equipment is as insubstantial as they are.

CREATURES OF THE DEEP

> *'Far, far below the deepest delvings of the Dwarves, the world is gnawed by nameless things. Even Sauron knows them not. They are older then he.'*
>
> *—Gandalf, The Two Towers*

Many strange and terrifying creatures lurk within the furthest depths of Moria's Mines. These beasts have never seen the light of day, and their existence is little more than half-whispered rumour amongst the Free Peoples. Even the Orcs regard these beasts with caution, as many of their number have been slain by them.

Each Creature of the Deep is unique, and should be created by the Narrator to fill a specific role in the adventure or chronicle using the rules presented in Chapter Three of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*. Without exception, however, Creatures of the Deep are terrifying, monstrous, and possessed of evil intention. One word of caution: when creating Creatures of the Deep, avoid basing them on identifiable mythological creatures from other sources. If the players easily identify a creature with another game or world from fantasy literature, it hurts the feel of Middle-earth you are trying to create.



RATS

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 3 (–1), Nimbleness 8 (+1)*, Perception 6 (±0)*, Strength 2 (–2), Vitality 5 (±0), Wits 2 (–2)

REACTIONS: Stamina ±0, Swiftness +1*, Willpower –1, Wisdom ±0

DEFENCE: 11

MOVEMENT RATE: 1

SKILLS: Climb +5, Search +6, Stealth (Sneak) +6, Survival (Underground) +5

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Natural Weapon (bite, 1/2-d6), Spread Disease

SIZE: Little (3 Wound Levels)

HEALTH: 3

UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

SPREAD DISEASE: A character who suffers one or more points of damage from a rat's bite suffers effects similar to those of a weak poison:

TYPE: Injury
ONSET TIME: 1 day
POTENTY: +0 TN
TREATMENT: +0 TN
EFFECT: Reduce Vitality by 1.
SECONDARY EFFECT: No effect.
STAGES: 1d6

DESCRIPTION

Rats are small rodents found throughout Moria. They carry a variety of unpleasant diseases, but are nevertheless a staple in the diet of the Orcs of Moria.

GIANT RATS

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 3 (–1), Nimbleness 8 (+1)*, Perception 6 (±0)*, Strength 3 (–1), Vitality 6 (±0), Wits 2 (–2)

REACTIONS: Stamina ±0, Swiftness +1*, Willpower –1, Wisdom ±0

Defence: 11
Movement Rate: 3
Skills: Climb +4, Search +6, Stealth (Sneak) +5, Survival (Underground) +6
Special Abilities: Natural Weapon (bite, 1d6), Spread Disease
Size: Small (4 Wound Levels)
Health: 5

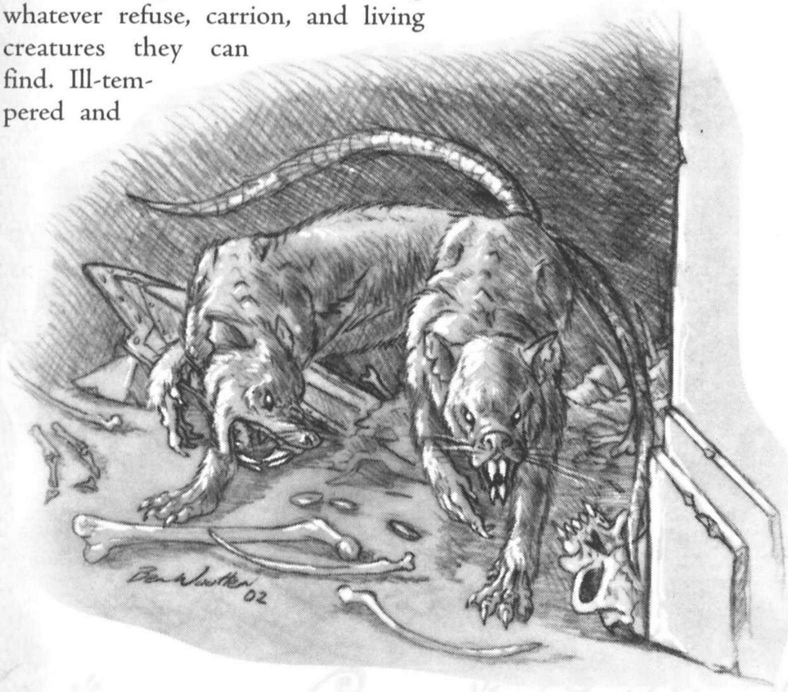
UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spread Disease: A giant rat's ability to spread disease is identical to that possessed by regular-sized rats, above.

DESCRIPTION

Some rats in Moria's depths have grown, over long years, into gigantic exemplars of their breed. Whether they have grown to the size of dogs due to some foul power of Shadow or through natural evolution is unknown, but also matters little. They move in swarms throughout Moria, devouring whatever refuse, carrion, and living creatures they can find. Ill-tempered and aggressive, they attack almost any living thing short of a Cave-troll.

Orcs hunt these creatures for their pelts and meat, though few others can stomach their foul flesh. While dangerous in great numbers, giant rats are easily defeated individually. Their greatest fear is fire, and the Orcs commonly use bonfires and torches to herd the creatures into traps where they can be captured and slaughtered.



BATS

Attributes: Bearing 3 (−1), Nimbleness 12 (+3)*, Perception 9 (+1)*, Strength 1 (−3), Vitality 4 (±0), Wits 2 (−2)
Reactions: Stamina ±0, Swiftness +3*, Willpower −1, Wisdom +1
Defence: 13
Movement Rate: 1
Skills: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite) +2, Observe (Spot): +5, Survival (Underground) +5
Special Abilities: Flight (3 yards), Natural Weapon (bite, 1 point)
Size: Little (3 Wound levels)
Health: 1

DESCRIPTION

Bats can be found throughout Moria, flying through the dark and feasting on insects. They are little threat to heroes, even in great numbers. When a great many are disturbed at once, though, they can be a serious distraction, causing a +5 TN test modifier to physical tests performed in the midst of their flapping and wheeling.

THE WATCHER IN THE WATER

Attributes: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 9 (+1), Strength 18 (+6)*, Vitality 14 (+4)*, Wits 7 (±0)
Reactions: Stamina +6*, Swiftness +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1
Defence: 11
Movement Rate: 96
Skills: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Beak, Tentacles) +8, Observe (Spot) +6, Stealth (Hide) +6
Special Abilities: Eyes of the Deep, Ink, Natural Weapon (beak, 2d6), Natural Weapon (tentacles, 1d6), Writhe of Tentacles
Size: Gigantic (9 Wound Levels, 5 Healthy)
Health: 20
TN Equivalent: 15

UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

Eyes of the Deep: The Watcher's baleful eyes allow it to see through even the cloudiest or inkiest of water and the darkest of nights with ease. However, its eyes may be attacked (−5 test penalty to hit). If struck, the creature suffers damage as normal, plus a −2 penalty to all tests for the next 1d6 rounds.

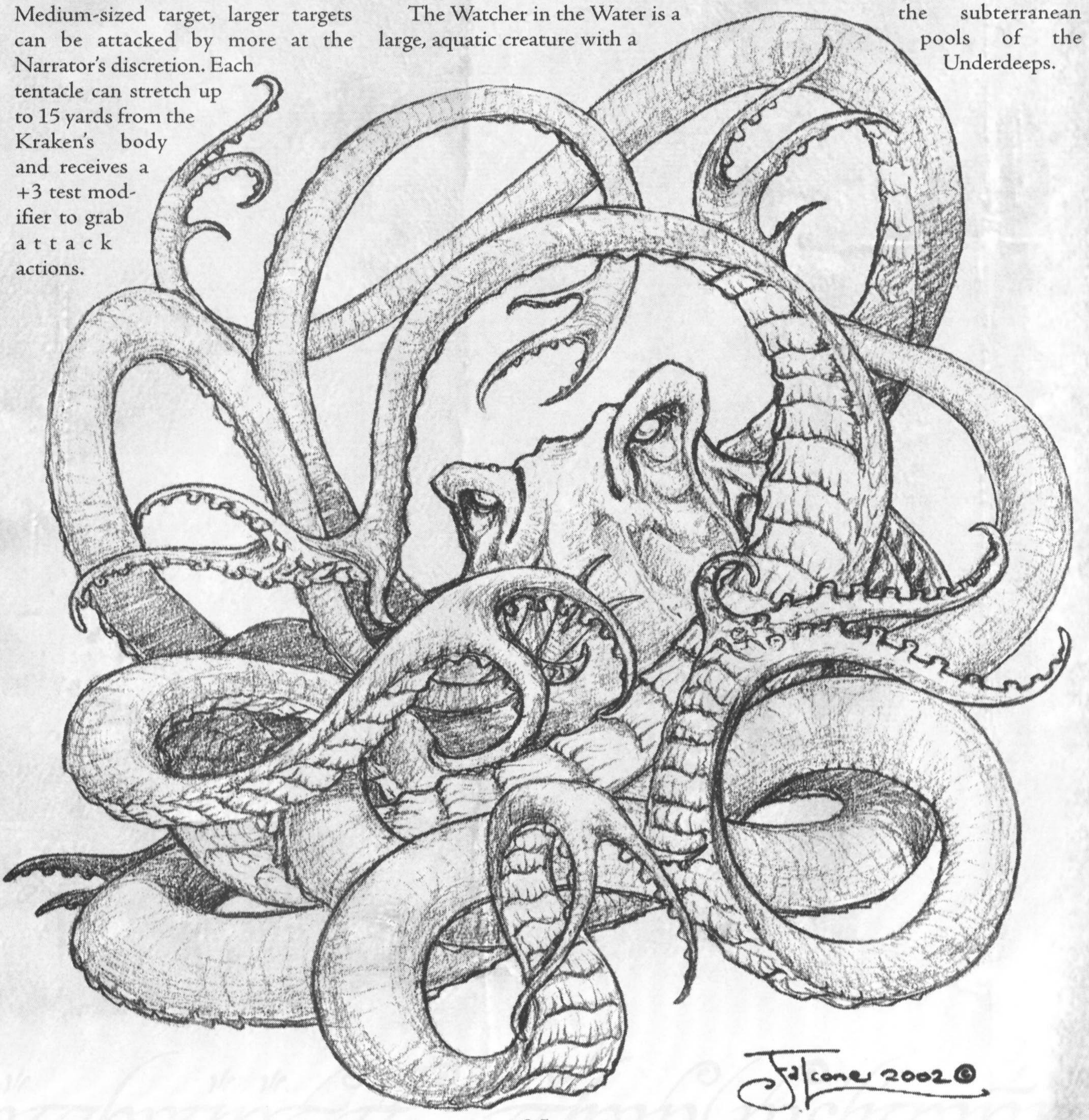
INK: Once per hour, the Watcher can produce great clouds of ink that turn water black as night in a 30-yard radius.

WRITHE OF TENTACLES: An addition to its regular complement of actions, the Watcher in the Water can make one additional attack action—as long as it is not a defensive attack or power attack—with each of its 24 tentacles. While no more than two tentacles can attack the same Medium-sized target, larger targets can be attacked by more at the Narrator's discretion. Each tentacle can stretch up to 15 yards from the Kraken's body and receives a +3 test modifier to grab attack actions.

Tentacles are attacked separately from the main body of the Kraken. Each one has a single Wound Level and is severed after it sustains that much damage from edged weapons. A kraken counts a quarter of the damage taken by its tentacles against its regular Wound Points, as well.

DESCRIPTION

The Watcher in the Water is a large, aquatic creature with a rubbery central body surrounding by a writhing mass of ropy, powerful tentacles. Its eyes are perched on opposite sides of its body, and even in the murky deep they gleam with an evil light. It lurks in the great lake that blocks the entrance to the Hollin Gate, harbouring a malevolent hatred of all things—Orcs and other denizens of Moria included—that go about on two feet. Other, similar creatures may well lurk within the subterranean pools of the Underdeeps.



Chapter Six

ADVENTURES IN MORIA

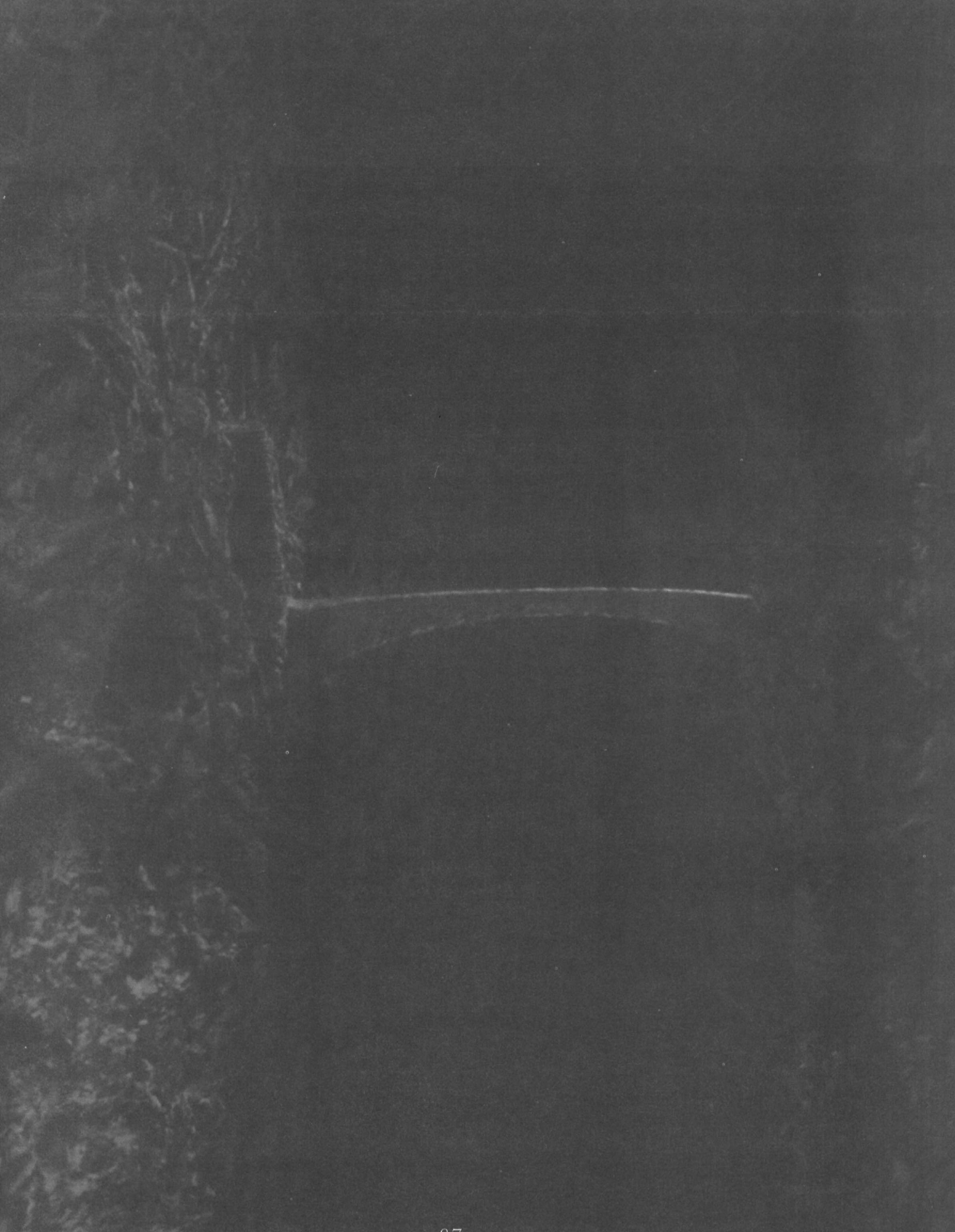
> *'[S]ince the Dwarves fled, no one dares to seek the shafts and treasuries down in the deep places: they are drowned in water — or in a shadow of fear.'*
> — *Gandalf, The Fellowship of the Ring*

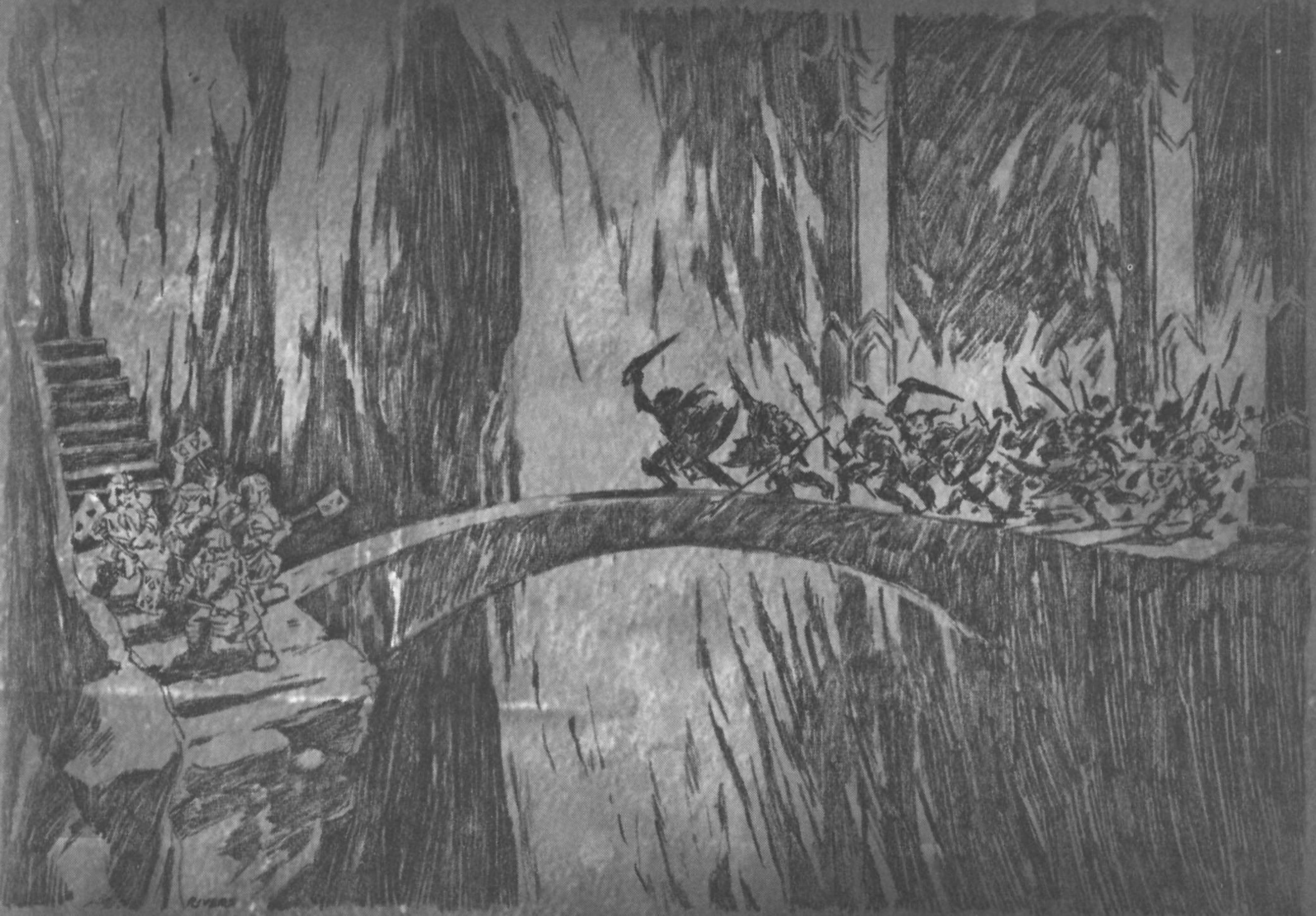
The two adventures presented here allow you to dive right into Moria without worrying about fully studying the contents of this boxed set. Both are designed to be easily inserted into any campaign. Rather than provide in-depth detail and a rigid plot to follow, they present a situation the characters must handle, outline the villains' goals, and advise you on how the situation can develop. After the two adventures, a series of guidelines for creating your own scenarios is presented.

ADVENTURE ONE: THE SIEGE

This adventure is set in TA 2990, during the time of Balin's colony in Moria. A caravan laden with much-needed supplies is due to arrive soon, and Balin worries that a band of Orcs or some other threat could intercept it. The fate of the colony hangs in the balance, and should the supplies fail to reach Moria the Dwarves may have to abandon their colony.

Balin asks the characters to stand guard over Durin's Bridge for three days. The caravan is running late, and Balin cannot exactly predict when it may enter Moria. Dwarf-warriors have fanned out across the countryside to find the supply wagons. Since Durin's Bridge is easily defended by a small group, Balin asks the heroes to watch over it while the Dwarf search parties scour the Dimrill Dale and points beyond. He is confident that he has little to fear from within Moria, but with so many of his warriors engaged in the search he feels it wisest to at least leave a skeleton guard behind.





ADVENTURE HOOKS

For the characters to become involved in this adventure, they must somehow come into contact with Balin and his people. This could happen in a number of ways.

Most obviously, the heroes may already be members of Balin's colony. Alternately, a Dwarf player character may be related to Balin or one of his followers. He receives word that the colony needs his aid. When he arrives, the search for the missing caravan has just begun.

As another option, while travelling across the countryside near Moria, the heroes could meet a Dwarf search party. The Dwarves ask for the heroes' aid in their task, and—if the heroes win the Dwarves' trust—after a day of searching they invite the characters back to Moria for food and drink. Once they arrive, Balin approaches them with this mission.

Finally, a hero's mentor or liege could ask him to seek out Balin and check on his progress in Moria. The heroes find Balin running low on supplies, and he asks them for their aid.

OTHER TIME PERIODS

While this adventure is set during a specific time period, you can easily alter it to fit other eras. The adventure can work as written for any period in which the Dwarves have a foothold in Moria. Otherwise, alter the adventure's goal to fit the current situation. If the heroes seek to explore Moria, you can use the encounters as isolated incidents they run into as they move through the Dwarf-kingdom. If they establish a temporary camp alone or with allies, this adventure can be used as part of a concerted attack on their stronghold by a force of Orcs.

FIGHTING ON THE BRIDGE

Refer to Chapter Three's description of Durin's Bridge, on page 26. In this adventure, the Orcs are willing to cross the bridge, even under fire. In battle, the heroes may use grab or charge actions to knock Orcs off the bridge.

The Orcs should not generally attempt such tactics. On one hand, it is far too easy to kill off a hero with an unlucky roll. On the other, the Orcs lack the cunning and imagination to try such a manoeuvre. The bridge has a sinister reputation with them, and they are too ill at ease on it to try anything risky.

ENCOUNTER ONE: GUARD DUTY

This encounter sets the scene for the entire adventure. Balin personally escorts the characters down to the Second Hall, along with his guards. The fate of the colony hangs in the balance if the caravan does not arrive. Thus, he has decided to personally lead the search.

The characters arrive on the morning of the first day. Balin leaves them with enough food, water, lanterns, and lamp oil to last three days. In addition, he can supply each character with a shortbow, and the group with about 100 arrows. Above all else, he cautions them, they must not allow the Orcs to seize the First Hall. If they are pressed by an attack, he counsels them to flee to Dimrill Dale and, if possible, wait near Durin's Stone. The stone serves as the search parties' marshalling point.

Refer to the poster map for a partial map of the Second Hall. Allow the characters to explore the area. Use the map tiles to chart any uncharted areas they wander into.

Allow the characters to plan their defence of the bridge as they wish. Crumbling stones and debris could be formed into a low wall at one end of the bridge with four hours of work and a Stonecraft test against TN 12. Depending on how the characters arrange themselves as they watch over the bridge, they could catch their foes by surprise. The encounters below summarise how different tactics can affect them.

A hero with the Track skill can scour the area for signs. With a successful TN 10 test, he discovers old Orc-tracks in the southern area of the map. When the Orcs move through this area, they approach the bridge from the first corridor south of its western end.

ENCOUNTER TWO: THE ORC PATROL

In the late evening of the first day, an Orc-patrol from the Mines approaches the bridge. The Orcs have been roused by the Dwarves' frenetic activity above and seek prisoners for questioning. The war party consists of eight warriors, four archers, and a champion. See Chapter Five for their statistics.

The Orcs approach from the south. They enter the map of the Second Hall via the south-westernmost corridor, travelling east to enter the Second Hall proper through its south-eastern entrance. The patrol is overconfident and quarrelsome. They argue loudly as they march and are easily taken by surprise. The characters gain a +5 bonus to Observe (Listen) tests to hear the Orcs' approach, while the Orcs suffer a –3 penalty to their Observe tests as they bicker amongst themselves. The war party plan to cross the bridge and head west to the First Hall, where they hope to ambush the next group of Dwarves who come through the Great Gates.

As soon as the Orcs see the heroes, they attack. These Orcs fight until half their number has fallen, then they attempt to flee. If the characters cut down the champion and leave no more than two other Orcs alive, the survivors scatter into the Mines. Otherwise, they return to their camp and rally a larger fighting force.

In battle, the Orc-champion leads the charge from the rear, urging the warriors forward while the archers fire from a safe distance. The champion avoids combat unless he can join several warriors who outnumber a single hero. The Orcs are eager to fight and can easily overlook a hero who hides and waits for them to pass before attacking.

ENCOUNTER THREE: CAVE-TROLL!

After the first battle, the rest of the day passes without incident. The Orc-captains decide to send out a larger force accompanied by a Cave-troll.

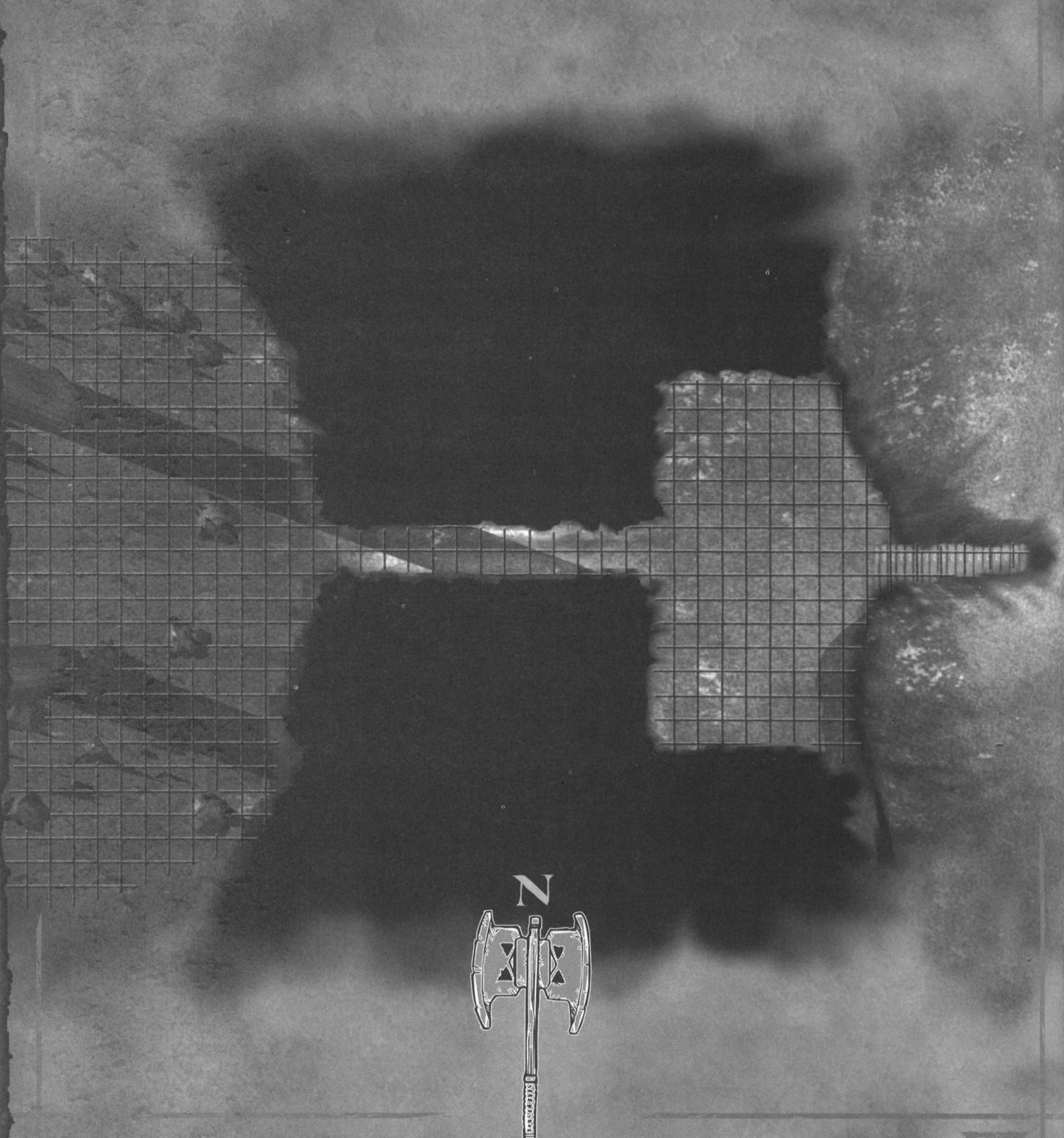
If the first patrol returned with news of the heroes' presence on the bridge, the Orcs dispatch a force of twelve warriors, six archers, a champion, two Troll-tenders, and a single Cave-troll. Otherwise, they send out a smaller force of eight warriors, four archers, a champion, two Troll-tenders, and a Cave-troll.

If the first patrol did not return, this second patrol follows the same plan as the first and suffers the same penalties. Confident that their comrades simply abandoned their mission or are still waiting for a chance to ambush the Dwarves—it has only been a single day, after all—they march without any effort to be stealthy. They follow the same plans as outlined in Encounter Two, save that the Orcs send the Cave-troll to attack first before advancing.

If the survivors did return with news of the heroes, the patrol proceeds quickly and quietly. They attempt Stealth tests to remain quiet, and break up into two groups. The first band consists of six warriors and three archers. These Orcs follow the same route as the first patrol. They make a tremendous amount of noise as they march, in an attempt to gain the characters' attention. Once they enter the hall, the warriors take cover in the Second Hall while the archers fire upon any visible targets.

The rest of the war party, including the Cave-troll, enters the hall on the opposite side of the rift that cuts it

DURIN'S BRIDGE



1 Square = 1 Yard

in two. They wait until the heroes advance across the bridge to attack the archers, at which point the Troll drops a large, wide stone across the fissure and charges across it to attack. While the heroes deal with the troll, the rest of the warriors move forward to swarm them.

These Orcs fight until the Cave-troll, the champion, and half the warriors have been defeated. When this happens, they flee back to the Mines.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE SURVIVORS

Finally, on the third day, the caravan arrives. A large body of Dwarf-warriors marches from the east, each Dwarf bearing a large pile of supplies. Balin accompanies this group and is eager to hear of the heroes' exploits. He is shocked to see the great number of Orcs they have defeated but is also impressed with their skill and bravery. He warns them that another attack could prove disastrous, as several more search parties now approach the bridge bearing the rest of the colony's supplies.

At this point, a debate erupts amongst the Dwarves. Some feel they should leave the supplies in the First Hall and immediately march in force to the south in hopes of catching and defeating the Orcs before they can launch another attack. These Dwarves are led by Borin, an experienced, hot-headed Orc-fighter. (Use the 'Typical Dwarf' statistics on page 42 for Borin, but add the edge Fell-handed: Orcs.) Balin wavers between carrying the supplies to safety and preparing for battle.

Allow the characters to participate in the debate. While little notice is taken of the opinions of non-Dwarves, Dwarven player characters could have substantial impact on the discussion. Take note of which—if any—heroes keep watch over the southern passages. While the Dwarves debate, the Orcs prepare to take action.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: THE FINAL BATTLE

Soon after the Dwarves arrive in the Second Hall, the Orcs launch their final and largest attack. The sounds of great drums emanating from Moria's depths can be heard in the distance. The Dwarves become silent as the tramp of many booted feet can be heard from the south. The Orcs have roused a mighty host to destroy the Dwarves!

This portion of the adventure uses the rules for battles found in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, pages 238–9. The Dwarves and the heroes are sorely outnumbered, but since they hold the bridge they have some hope of victory. Furthermore, if any of the characters avoided the debate and instead kept watch, the Dwarves have the opportunity to form a defensive line across the bridge. In this case, the Orcs and Dwarves begin the battle in an even position. Otherwise, the Orcs have surprise and the Dwarves begin one step below even.

Each round of battle, the characters have a chance to tip the scales in the Dwarves' favour. Allow each player to decide if his character is in the thick of the fighting or near the edges. Those who stand and fight have three chances to ensure victory for the Dwarves.

In the first round of battle, a powerful Orc-war chief leads his warriors across the bridge in a reckless charge. The war chief is accompanied by four champions. If the heroes defeat these Orcs, the Dwarves gain a +4 bonus to their battle roll, and the Orcs suffer a –2 penalty to all their future battle rolls.

In the second round of battle, a Cave-troll threatens to single-handedly smash through the Dwarves' line. If the heroes defeat the Cave-troll, the Dwarves automatically advance one step closer to victory. For the rest of the battle, the Orcs suffer a (cumulative) –1 penalty to their battle rolls.

On the fifth found of battle, if the fight continues that long, an Orc-captain takes to the field. He orders the Orcs to abandon the bridge. His archers line up and begin raining arrows upon the Dwarves. To achieve final victory, the heroes and their Dwarf-allies must charge the Orcs' line. If the characters can defeat the Orc-captain and his six warrior bodyguards, the Orcs flee the field in a panic. The Dwarves automatically win the battle.

On rounds without special events, you should not normally use the Hero Combat Table, as it may wear down the characters' strength too quickly. However, if the battle has not been decided after the fifth round, you can begin to use it if you wish.

The heroes may come up with a particularly cunning plan during the course of the battle. For example, they may convince the Dwarves to feign falling back to the First Hall, only to launch a devastating counterattack as the Orcs make their way across Durin's Bridge. Plans of sufficient merit provide a bonus of up to +3 on the Dwarves' battle roll.

CONCLUSION

If the characters help win the day for the Dwarves, they are treated as trusted allies, hailed as heroes, and made the honoured guests of a great feast. They gain a point of Renown.

If the characters were forced to abandon the bridge before the great battle, they can head to the Dimrill Dale to seek out Balin. He does not blame them for fleeing, as he did not expect an Orc-attack. He marshals his warriors for battle. Proceed immediately to Encounter Five.

If the Dwarves lose the final battle, they scatter to the east. Balin survives to gather his people together to return to Moria. They find the Orcs have returned to the Mines, but perhaps the first blow leading to the final doom of Balin's efforts has been struck.

ADVENTURE TWO: A FLIGHT THROUGH THE DARK

In this adventure, Balin asks the characters to venture into the Redhorn Lodes to discover what force could be behind a recent spate of Orc-attacks. This adventure fits in perfectly as a follow-up to Adventure One.

Over the past few months, Balin's colony has encountered increasing resistance from Orcs and other creatures. Scouting parties and mining teams now go missing, and the last two supply caravans have failed to arrive. Balin desperately needs to determine the level of threat his people face, but he cannot afford to divert his already-stretched resources to the problem. Thus, he turns to the heroes for aid. If they journey into the Mines and uncover the source of this threat, the Dwarves can prepare a decisive assault to destroy the Orc-king behind the recent troubles.

It should be noted that Balin has thus far discounted the threat posed by Durin's Bane, the Balrog. He believes that the Orcs have been prodded into action by an ambitious captain and that with that captain's death the Orcs' resistance will disintegrate.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

If the characters participated in the first adventure, they have an obvious reason to descend into the Mines. Due to their courage in the face of the enemy, Balin is confident they can handle themselves. The other hooks presented in Adventure One also work perfectly well here.

OTHER TIME PERIODS

This adventure is written in a fairly loose format. While the first encounter focuses on the characters' journey to the Mines, the rest covers their flight from the Balrog and its minions. As such, you can use this adventure whenever the heroes must escape a powerful creature or large force of Orcs in Moria. The pursuit system is applicable to situations beyond this scenario.

ENCOUNTER ONE: INTO THE MINES

As the characters travel from the Seventh Deep to the Redhorn Lodes, use the map tiles and Peril system to determine the encounters that befall them. Refer to the rules for navigating Moria on page 16 as the Dwarves try to plot their best route to their destination.

ENCOUNTER TWO: THE TRIBUTE CARAVAN

Once the characters reach the Redhorn Lodes, they encounter a band of Orcs dragging a mine cart laden with finely crafted goods, weapons, and armour looted from Moria. This cart holds the Balrog's tribute, a collection of beautiful items the beast crushes and melts to sate its lust for destruction.

The party of Orcs includes six warriors, a champion, and a sorcerer. The warriors struggle to pull the cart along while the champion offers encouragement with his whip. The sorcerer walks ahead of the group, pausing occasionally to curse at the Orcs behind him and demand they match his pace. Luckily for the heroes, the Orcs cannot believe that the Dwarves would be so bold as to explore the parts of the Mines they control. Furthermore, the Orcs resent having to give their hard-won treasure to the Balrog. The sorcerer is careful not to bring an honour guard so large that the Orcs in it could defy his authority and carry off the treasure as their own.

At this point, the characters face two options. If they stand back and watch the Orcs, they might overhear them discussing the purpose of their journey. Of course, they must understand Orc-speech to do this, but if they can they hear the sorcerer refer to the 'fiery master' and the tribute they must pay him. Furthermore, they can overhear the warriors refer to the recent raids they launched against the Dwarves to win the prizes piled in the cart.

The Orcs suffer a –2 penalty to their Observe tests to notice the heroes, as they are absorbed in their work and have little worry of an assault. If the characters decide to attack, the Orcs charge into battle. Once the characters overwhelm the Orcs, they discover on the sorcerer's body a crudely drawn map that appears to mark the cart's destination.

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE BLEAK CAVERN

If the characters proceed to the point marked on the Orcs' map, they come to a large, hollowed cavern near the bottom of the Redhorn Lode. A wide, tall passage runs from this place to the north. Down this corridor, the Balrog awaits its treasure. Its fiery radiance shines down the passage and bathes the cavern in a flickering, red glow. A dozen Orc-warriors led by a noble stand guard here, waiting for the treasure caravan to arrive to complete the tribute gathered for the Balrog. Already, three other carts filled with treasure are arranged here.

At this point, the adventure becomes difficult to plot out. The characters may attack the Orcs, or they may attempt to watch them for a time in hopes of catching sight of

whatever or whoever will arrive to collect the tribute. If the characters attack the Orcs or are detected, proceed to Encounter Four.

Otherwise, after an hour the Balrog grows agitated and stalks into the chamber. It strikes down half the Orcs and bellows in rage. Terrified of the Balrog and mindful of the danger the Orcs could face if the final tribute cart is not uncovered, the Orc-noble raises an alarm by sounding a loud horn he carries. Soon, all of the Mines are roused for action as Orc-search parties swarm the area. In this case, proceed to Encounter Four.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE CHASE

The following rules can be used to adjudicate chases in Moria. They are designed to simulate the frenetic action as the characters rush headlong through passages and tunnels while a powerful force of Orcs or a terrible creature—such as the Balrog—pursues them.

To run a chase, pick a spot in Moria where the chase begins and decide where the characters must go for the chase to end or how far ahead of their opponents they must run. For the purposes of this particular chase, the Orcs break off pursuit if the characters flee Moria, if they make it to the Fourth Deep, or if you decide that the characters have managed to hide from their pursuers.

The heroes are pursued by the Balrog and the Orcs that prepared to offer it tribute. In addition, the noble's horn calls 4d6 warriors, 1d6 scouts, and 2d6 archers to join the chase.

Chases are broken up into rounds. On each round, compare the speed of the slowest pursuer to the slowest player character. The faster group gains a +1 bonus to their pursuit test. If the slower group carries a very heavy burden, they suffer a –1 penalty to their test.

Next, the pursuers must make a Track test opposed by a Stealth test made by one of the characters. Whoever wins this test gains a +1 bonus to their pursuit test.

Now, each party makes a pursuit test. This works as a combined test, using the character from each group with the best total Run skill as the leader. The winner of this test may move the pursued group one level up or down the Pursuit Chart. The pursuers always stay at the engaged level.

The Pursuit Chart is an abstract tool to judge the distance between two groups. The characters' starting position is determined by the narrator. In the sample adventure, the Orcs and the Balrog start at Engaged, while the heroes start at Close.

Make pursuit tests for every half-hour of the chase, applying rules for Weariness to both sides as normal. Use the overview map of Moria to determine how long a pursuit must take before the characters reach a safe point. Make Peril tests as normal during a pursuit; fleeing characters suffer a –4 penalty due to their haste. If they encounter danger, they must run through or around it—depending on the type of encounter they run into—or risk allowing the Orcs behind them to catch up.

The following rules apply to each level in the pursuit chart.

ESCAPE: At this level, the chase is over. The characters race ahead of their foes and out of sight, forcing the pursuers to break off the chase.

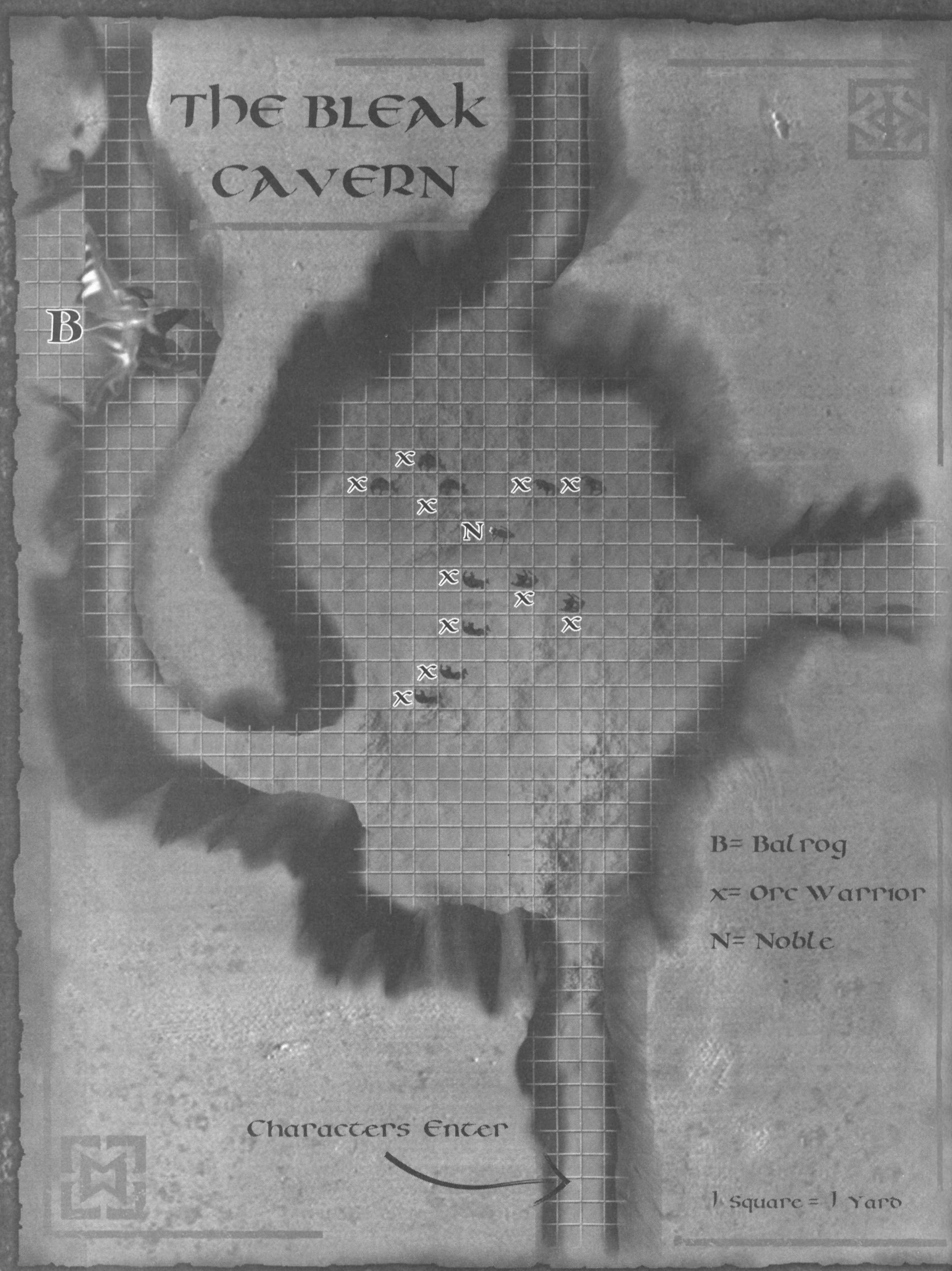
DISTANT: The characters are out of range of bows and other missile weapons, but the pursuit continues on.

FAR: The characters are in sight and within bow range. Any archers in the pursuing group may stop to fire on the characters with a base –2

PURSUIT CHART

Escape
Distant
Far
Near
Close
Engaged

THE BLEAK CAVERN


B
x
x
x
x
x
N
x
x
x
x
x
x
x
B= Balrog
x= Orc Warrior
N= Noble
Characters Enter
1 Square = 1 Yard

penalty at a range of 100 yards. Archers who stop and fire are automatically considered out of the chase.

NEAR: The characters can see their foes behind them as they rush through Moria. Arrows and thrown weapons buzz over and past them. Any archers in the pursuing group may stop to fire on the characters at a range of 50 yards. They are not considered out of the chase.

CLOSE: The enemy is almost upon the heroes. Any archers in the pursuing group may stop to fire on the characters at a range of 25 yards. They are not considered out of the chase.

ENGAGED: Use a map tile to create a layout of the area. The pursuers are within 10 yards of the characters. Determine both groups' positions on the map and run combat rounds as normal. If the heroes manage to escape off the map tile with no living enemy within 10 yards of them, they re-enter the chase system at the Close level. When the pursuing party catches up to its quarry, roughly one-quarter of their number rush forward to engage. Every 2d6 rounds afterward, another quarter of the Orcs enter the map tile.

When running a chase, add as much description and drama as possible. Keep the characters' relative position on the Pursuit Chart a secret. Instead, describe to them how close the Orcs approach. Tell them of the twisting labyrinth they run through, and hint that perhaps they have become lost.

To add excitement to a chase, you can use the map tiles to chart the characters' progress. For certain portions of the pursuit, use the map tile to determine if the heroes become lost or accidentally run down a dead end. Designate each passage that heads off the tile as leading to a different area of Moria. For example, on one tile five of the exits may lead to the First Deep (and the safety of the Great Gate), but one may lead towards the western Mines. The characters must use their skills to determine the correct path. If they tarry, a portion of the pursuing force catches up to them.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: THE END?

As the Orcs pursue the characters, the final resolution of this adventure depends on how the characters escape. If the heroes are forced to flee Moria, they may not be able to return until after Balin's fall. If they flee to the upper levels of Dwarrowdelf, they may find that the Dwarves refuse to believe their stories of Durin's Bane.

Will the characters stand by Balin? The colony is doomed, but can they at least soften the blow to the Free Peoples? What do the Orcs and the Balrog plan next? Only you and your players can answer these questions for certain.

DESIGNING YOUR OWN MORIA ADVENTURES

To help you build the adventures for a Moria chronicle, the following steps give you a starting point and provide some structure for the process. These guidelines are by no means a canonical method for designing adventures, but they do bring into focus some of the issues involved in creating adventures in Moria.

1. CREATE A GOAL: What is the point of the adventure? Do the characters seek to find an item, must they defend a place from an Orc-attack, or do they simply want to make it from one place in Moria to another? Good adventures should have a clear, compelling goal that the characters can meet. Think about how the adventure should end in terms of the characters' actions, and tie that ending into your chronicle. Once you have determined the adventure's purpose in the grand scheme of things, you can start to consider other details.

2. CREATE A GOOD HOOK: An adventure hook is anything that latches on to the players' interest and drags them into the adventure. Just like a baited hook can catch a fish, an interesting story hook grabs the players into the plot and engages their imagination. Consider the characters' backgrounds and the players' interests in roleplaying. The characters' edges and flaws can play a big role in this step, especially Oath, Fealty, and Duty. The characters' relationships with friends and villains they've gained over the course of your chronicle—or from their backgrounds—can also prove helpful here. The players are much more apt to aid a non-player character whom their heroes have grown attached to. Alternatively, if the adventure gives the heroes a chance to battle the Shadow, it is much more compelling for them to struggle against a villain they have reason to hate.

3. CREATE A TIMELINE: Once you know where an adventure is heading, you can chart out the events and encounters that carry the characters from the opening scene to the story's climax. For adventures that involve travel, refer to the maps of Moria included in this set. Pick out areas where the characters may encounter enemies, hazards, and perhaps even potential allies. Other adventures revolve around a series of events. For example, Adventure One, in which the characters must defend Durin's Bridge from an attacking horde of Orcs, is organised by the Orcs' successive attacks over time.

4. DESIGN INDIVIDUAL EVENTS: A good encounter needs to be unique. If your encounters are too similar, the adventure feels repetitive and can grow boring. Each encounter should have at least one important trait that distinguishes it from the others. Battles should have unique foes or be in exciting environments. Negotiations need non-player characters who stand out from other people the heroes have met. A character could have something as simple as a strange accent or a unique personality trait such as extreme greed. Puzzles can involve a wide range of problems, from a massive pit the characters must cross to a riddle they need to solve.

5. TONE: Middle-earth has an epic, noble feel. Adventures should not revolve around material reward, personal gain, or other base motivations. Dwarves attempting to reclaim Moria aren't interested in recovering their heirlooms because of their weight in silver. They want them because they're rightfully theirs.

The characters are heroes who seek to defeat the Shadow because it is the right thing to do. That doesn't mean the characters should be willing to throw themselves into terrible danger for no good reason. Instead, focus on the emotional attachments between the characters and their friends, allies, and enemies.

6. FUN: Most importantly, an adventure should be fun. If the players seem bored, something is wrong. Note what portions of an adventure entertain them, and keep track of the allied characters and villains they enjoy interacting with. Keep those notes handy the next time you design an adventure.

TOOLS

Once you have the basic plot and encounters of your adventure in mind, the materials in this boxed set make it easy to produce a complete adventure.

While the map tiles are useful for mapping out portions of Moria, they are also convenient for building smaller adventure areas. For a combat encounter, pick out a small area of rooms or corridors where the battle takes place. Keep in mind that you do not need to map out every square inch the characters travel. Instead, create maps that focus on encounter areas and use narrative descriptions to move the action from scene to scene. Just like a book or movie, highlight the important parts of the story. Don't force the players to navigate an endless series of featureless rooms on their way from one area to the next.

The rules for determining what a given room contains (beginning on page 69) are also a useful tool in laying our your adventures. While you can roll randomly to populate a given chamber, you can just as easily use the options provided as fodder for further ideas of your own.

Finally, the creatures described in Chapter Five can greatly simplify your work of creating scenarios in Moria. There's no sense spending a lot of time to build minor creatures from scratch. Save your effort for the truly unique foes your heroes will face.

Ettenmoors
Erebor
Esgaroth
Mountains of
Carrock
Weathertop
Great East Road
Rivendell
Old Forest Road
Hoarwell River
Loudwater River
Rhudaur
Misty Mountains
Mirkwood
Gladden
Gladden Fields
Eregion
Moria
Silverlode
Lorien
Dol Guldur
Nimrodel
Anduin, the Great River
Dunland
Limlight
Fangorn
Wold
The Brown Lands
Isengard
West Emnet
East Emnet
Emyn Muil
Dagorlad
Gap of Rohan
Rohan
Dead Marshes
Swanfleet
Helm's Deep
Edoras
Entwash
Rauros
Nindalf
White Mountains
Udûn
Erech
Cair Andros
Minas Tirith
Osgiliath
Minas Morgul
Pinnath Gelin
Gondor
Anfalas
Morthond
Kiril
Ringlo
Serni
Erui

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